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# Drawing the Betweenness of Place

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By  
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## Abstract

This research explores the practice of creativity as a means to illuminating the significant yet underexplored concept of *betweenness*. It consists of a theoretical interpretation of the concept and its intersection with related concepts, augmented by interview material drawn from participants experiencing the *betweenness* of everyday journeying. Research participants were drawn from the Tasmanian arts community and included practitioners of visual arts, music, dance, literature, architecture, poetry and film. Creative production itself involves crossings-over; attempts to transcend the mundane by entering emotional and intellectual terrain that is unfamiliar and of unknown status – between what is known and what is yet to be known. For this reason, art practitioners were deemed to be particularly suited to the research needs of the project.

The thesis explores participants' descriptions of their everyday journeys between two places in order to answer the following questions. Is the inchoate experience, the numinous sensation that seems to characterise commonly undertaken journeys between two places, the emotional essence of *betweenness*? Given that the inchoate and numinous that qualify *betweenness* reside at the limits of representation, how might one represent these experiences? This might be described as 'representing the unrepresentable – without representing it'. The device that I use is the practice of *drawing*. Rather than representing the *betweenness*, I use the practice of *drawing* as a device to 'give presence' to the *betweenness*.

The research uses a phenomenological approach to elucidate individuals' perceptions of their journeys between two places, and then gathers observations into groups which, together with a review of the literature and autoethnographic explorations, reveal several of many possible components of *betweenness*. Taken together these comprise a drawing of the *betweenness* of place. The responses are visual and evocative while also affective in the more discursive sense of the term. Stress is on the process, then, and no 'hard, definitive' conclusion as to the nature of *betweenness* is reached.

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# Prologue: Seeking an engaged form of living

The act of dwelling is different for everybody. Some hang from hooks through their skin, others traverse mountains and valleys in blizzard conditions, some make things happen and others curl up with a book on a couch. In its most reduced form, dwelling is the liberty to make choices about one's personal physical circumstances. Chained and tortured, one cannot lift an arm or tend to one's wounds. Having access to facilities, comfort and choice as a standard mode of living – and basic human right – is the first step towards dwelling. From there, all dwelling is different as each individual responds to their genetic, ancestral, cultural and experiential toolkit. Some have greater access than others; some make better use of what they have. Ultimately dwelling is about the goodness of heart to observe, to sense and to be open to the possibility of what is – and what might be.

My father grew up out the back of Dorriggo, in a house with a dirt floor – out past Sheep Station Creek. My father's mother, Stella, told stories of two days' travel by horse and cart to get to the nearest neighbour. My father, the third child of four, left home and school at 13 to trap for food and follow the bullock trains. The men and boys would travel for weeks at a time, felling and splitting cedar logs and bringing them back to the mill for conversion to timber planks. My mother, a trained nurse, was one of eleven children growing up in a two bedroom terrace in Bondi Junction. Her father delivered the milk by horse and cart and she was warm in the bed she shared with her sister until her father left for work at 3am, taking his leather overcoat with him. She graduated the same year, in the same class as the first Aboriginal woman completed a nursing certificate: the bush in my father meets the sea in my mother.

Throughout my childhood, my parents worked extremely long hours and I was often left to my own devices. I was a good kid and managed to fill my time with many chores that usually revolved around various and multiple pets. It wasn't all work,

however, as my grandfather won a sweet cubby in a raffle and from all his many grandchildren gave it to me. It was my home away from home, my place to drift within for hours.

My other home, the one for sleeping and eating, was a brand new 1970 red brick, standard plan house, though the toilet was outside because my father, having grown up with the toilet always outside the house, when building his home for his own family in the 1970's insisted that it still be outside. The shower, for a reason I never ascertained, often had three-inch slugs slowly making their way up the walls. We had a chook bucket and a 1200 x 800mm deep freeze to hold the meat from our farm. It was a family job to sit around the table and bag the various cuts of lamb or beef into meal sized portions, label and freeze. Sometimes after school, alone in the house, I would help myself to a mud crab claw, as Dad was pretty handy with the square hook.

My brother married when I was five. I was the flower girl. He and his wife, Mr and Mrs John and Sue Smith, bought the vacant block next door, moved the jersey cow on and built their first home right on top of where the old mulberry tree once stood. My uncle and his family lived on the diagonal block behind. They always seemed to be fighting, though Mum said they only did so on the full moon. My grandparents lived in the block behind the house for a while; but that was where my dad's young first wife had committed suicide, so everyone felt sad there. There was a really old lemon tree and once they cut the head off a chook for dinner and let it run around. I was too little to think anything except keep it away from me.

Every week or two the house smelled of ironing aid as Mum caught up after two weeks on night shift, and in April there might be a batch of Anzac biscuits in the oven. The rooms of the house were small with polished floorboards and an open fire in the lounge. From the age of eight, when my older sister went to boarding school, it was my job to fill the wood box and light the fire each winter evening. Dad always made sure there was a full flagon of diesel next to the fire to help me do so.

Looking back now, my ideas of *dwelling* were mostly about the overwhelming scent of cedar sawdust on my dad's blue work singlets, perhaps because when I could smell him, he was near me; or the feeling of warm sun shining through my long straight hair while brushing it dry on the back verandah. Writing was more someone to talk to than a job to be done. In Grade Six I was presented with an award for creative writing. Back then I wrote solely from my thoughts – dreams of what might happen, what I couldn't see. Thinking about these times now, with a partner and three small children of my own, they feel quite formative: as practices, these *dwelling moments* are simple, gentle and rich.

That this was Australia and that I was Australian was never something I questioned. It is more than likely that we have Aboriginal blood, but it's not confirmed and not encouraged. I wouldn't mind. My formative youth is done: my experiential and genetic foundations have been layered and woven, so I've missed the opportunity of recognising any understanding from within. While it is likely that many of the ways that I know the world have some intrinsic sense of this knowing, I'd like to know more about this country and Aboriginal ways of being in the world. I'd like to have Aboriginal friends. Not as an act of reconciliation or as political allies – just as people friends or family-like friends, who care and want to share in a 'joining up' kind of way. Joining up is a way to mingle, to understand and to unravel the intricacies of knotty lives while sharing the fundamentals of domesticity.

I know about this joining up idea because I've had a really good time at it: within the home of several dear and darling friends. In one particular instance it was through this process of blending our familial lives – or living with two (eventually five member) families together in what was essentially a one room house – that I came to understand the significance of architecture as a discipline. If there is one thing that I can assert with confidence, it is that architecture is absolutely and fundamentally important; indeed, critical to our capacity to *dwell*. It is the job of an architect, I believe, through her/his life journey, to gain an understanding and sensibility for the ideas of *dwelling* – both in the design and the means through which the built form is lived through and evolved.

I had, in my life, experienced fragments of *dwelling* or, *dwelling moments*; it was a new sensation, however, to experience these feelings in a more refined, significant and nuanced form – one that was sustained over a much longer period of time. I had not considered that everyday life could be so intensely fulfilling. *Dwelling* was, as Heidegger (1971) suggested: a process of contemplating the space between the earth and the sky (and one could spend a lifetime there) – though for me it was not that simple. *Dwelling* as an engaged form of living also meant getting in, getting dirty and being a part of the process of life. It's a little difficult to describe because it is in a strange *between space* where contradictory elements overlap, where metaphor rings true and often unimagined possibilities become possible. Through a maelstrom of blending – propulsion, chaos, energy, rigour, spirit with thoughtfulness and both earnest and languid contemplation – you are left feeling like screaming in your sleep or sleeping in your scream. *Dwelling* for me swirled its way through celebrations and feasts; through play, performance, construction and story. *Dwelling* seemed able to merge intense quality and care with equally intense reckless abandon.

What I was experiencing as *dwelling* was not exactly what I had expected – it caught me a little by surprise. So much more than a feeling of simple love – or perhaps woven with love – it was something more akin to feeling both held and offered to the world. It was a personal thing: a psychological and physical dusting off; it was not instantaneous, it was more some kind of flow – with shifting perceptions of daylight and night hours – through weeks, months and seasons. It often hurt and was usually chaotic – but it is with the greatest affection that I say that this particular place (Lovett Bay) and its particular people and all of the messy bits in-between – became embedded in my heart: a dwelling in-motion, a dwelling in-life.



# Chapter 1: Introduction: describing a personal journey

## **In the beginning...**

The story begins with my journey into arts-based creative culture. The path my life has taken has kindled an earnest care for intellectual and emotional progression – this care has seemed at times like a kernel of hope in an otherwise distracted, complicated life and world. Finding an initial impression in even the most rudimentary of forms, led me to seek out, to *chase* creative culture in both its raw and refined expression. Chancing upon the arts as a young person assisted in the development of my sense of self and provided glimmers of inspiration. As my interest developed, the spectrum of art forms in which I became engaged spanned the breadth of creative culture, carrying me through all manner of venues and experiences. One aspect of the spectrum included the more grunge, urban and sub-urban artist-controlled movements and collectives. Examples of this include artist-run exhibition spaces, individuals who produce their own material (zines, comics, records, performances and live music), vernacular and experimental architecture, experimental dance, plays, poetry readings, pub bands and art house films. The *chase* also led me to large scale commercial productions and classical art forms which included ballet, musical recitals, and classic novels, visiting numerous art galleries and experiencing various performances.

This breadth of exposure, coupled with an insatiable inquisitiveness, added a *gleaning* quality to my pursuits. If creative culture might be imagined as a web of ganglia and appendages, dead ends and space-hungry fields of colour, my trajectory through such a categorical dream (or nightmare) could be compared to a bower bird seeking out something akin to *blue*. While the media were diverse (in part following a process of experimentation), over time I developed a set of criteria and a certain consistency in the things I *specifically* sought out – I was chasing *something*. While I

was open to a diverse range of creative cultural experiences, and there was always an element of randomness and chance involved, I developed an ability to be selective; to refine my choices. While I came to be chasing *something in particular*, I could not name what that thing was.

Through this immersion in such creative cultural modes as visual, performing, literary, built and musical arts, I developed a passion for creativity both as an *act of making* and as *experience*. Forming connections with artists of various genres over a period of time helped me to understand the processes involved in the *making* of art objects and experiences. I also explored my own creative processes through the production of material objects and, in line with this enthusiasm for making, I participated in several small exhibitions and group shows. Making works for exhibition led me to question the nature of making itself and, thus, to pose the more profound questions surrounding art as a process and creative culture in general.

*Experiencing* creative culture is what people (both art makers and non-makers) do as part of the process of practice. Visiting galleries, attending concerts, participating in workshops or academic study is part of the professional undertaking of arts-based professionals. The ability of the artist or creative professional to be *known* by their relevant peers is deemed to be a desirable and advantageous component of arts-based professional practice in the contemporary setting. Be it in the form of book or record cover signings, presence at gallery openings or performances, or the relationships formed through liaison, the creative person's presence in the creative arena constitutes a mechanism for adding value to creative products. That value may be economic, but, importantly for this study, it is also cultural.

When experiencing creative culture through music, poetry, painting and architecture, the senses are brought into play, and so are the emotions. In the process of experiencing creative culture, and participating in its making, I developed an affective sensibility – of my own design – and an awareness that I found motivating and inspiring. It led to questions and the development of *perspectives*, both intellectual (casual and academic) and sensorial. The intellectual awareness could be

labelled my ontology, but my sensorial awareness defied description. These experiences led me to deduce that *experience* of creative culture, while an intellectual pursuit, is also part of the sensory realm. The tools that I drew on for my intellectual understanding nudged close to the feelings of the sensorial, but never cracked the sensorial shell; that is, I was not able to intellectualise the sensorial in more than a superficial way. These experiences drew me to explore, through the academy, the capacity to understand and the intellectual understanding of that which I was *chasing* (but not yet able to name).

## Betweenness in the discourse

Betweenness is a term employed in academic settings. In my encounters with the term, however, I became convinced that betweenness had not been explored comprehensively and remained poorly understood and under-explicated. In his book entitled *The Betweenness of Place*, J. Nicholas Entriken (1991, p.2) does not explore betweenness *per se*, instead exploring place from “points in between” (1991, p. 5); that is, as an expression of the relationship between (usually two) parameters. In the case of Entriken (1991) those two parameters were the subjective, centred, particular vantage point of the researcher and the objective, decentred, scientific vantage point of universal knowledge. *Betweenness*, it seemed, had not been explored as a concept, or spatial entity in its own right.

A second prominent usage is to be found within the context of power differentials between men and women. *Betweenness* has been prominently deployed within feminist methodologies, particularly in terms of the geographical *field* of research. As women fought for and obtained discursive and social power, it became evident that a more reflexive, sensitive and flexible methodological approach was required in order to create a more ethical research environment and, thus, a “politics of engagement” (Katz 1994, p. 72). As stated by Katz (1994, p. 72):

I am always, everywhere, in “the field.” My practice as a politically engaged geographer – feminist, Marxist, anti-racist – requires that I work on many fronts – teaching, writing and non-academy based practice – not just to expose power relations but to overcome them (Mascia-Lees *et al.* 1989, p. 33)... this task requires recognition that as an ethnographer and as a woman my subject position is constituted in spaces of betweenness, what Mascia-Lees and her colleagues (1989, p. 33) call, “a position neither inside nor outside”. From such a standpoint it may be possible to frame questions that are at once of substantive and theoretical interest as well as of practical significance to those with whom we work. By operating within these multiple contexts all the time, we may begin to see, be seen, listen and be heard in the multiply determined fields that we are everywhere always in. In this way we can build a politics of engagement and simultaneously practice committed scholarship. The stakes all round could not be higher.

England (1994, pp. 86-87) suggests that betweenness references a mixed zone of both researcher and the ‘thing’ researched:

We do not conduct fieldwork on the unmediated world of the researched, but on the world *between* ourselves and the researched. At the same time the “betweenness” is shaped by the researcher’s biography, which filters the “data” and our perceptions and interpretations of the fieldwork experience. So, should I decide to pursue my research project on the lesbian community, it will be in the full knowledge that I cannot speak for them and not myself. What I will be studying is a world that is already interpreted by people who are living their lives in it and my research would be an account of the “betweenness” of their world and mine.

Feminist geographers theorised the field as a space of betweenness because they were dissatisfied with categorical and binary divisions within academic settings.

Betweenness was a way of getting *between* the binaries to address difference and power in the relationship between the researcher and the researched. Indeed, in some cases, the feminist appeal was almost a ‘call to arms’, urging female researchers to always remember the partial nature of their relationship to others. England (1994, pp. 80-81) quotes Virginia Woolf:

Think we must. Let us think in offices; in omnibuses; while we are standing in the crowd watching Coronations and Lord Mayor’s Shows; let us think as we pass the Cenotaph; and in Whitehall; in the gallery of the House of Commons; in the Law Courts; let us think at baptisms and marriages and funerals. Let us never cease from thinking – what is this ‘civilization’ in which we find ourselves? What are these professions and why should we make money out of them? Where in short is it leading us, the procession of the sons of educated men?

England explains the significance of Woolf’s observations (1994, pp. 80-81):

Virginia Woolf’s words speak to the process of making geography. She urges us to think about and to reflect on the spatial fabric of everyday life. She asks us to consider the structure of our social relations and how we are accountable for them and how our actions perpetuate those relations. She wants us to consider how things could be different.

These texts were formative for me in my undergraduate studies in human geography, and have influenced my ongoing thinking. The core values of the feminist movement, to “identify and dismantle systemic gender inequality” and to “disrupt traditional organizations [sic] of space” (Pratt 2009) are integral to this research as they are integral to my life. So, too, the more contemporaneous post-structuralist feminism espousing the recognition of multiple truths, have become part of my ontology. In stepping off from both Entriken and the feminist geographers I seek to bring betweenness itself to the fore as I believe that it is a significant concept within the geographical imaginary and has been seriously overlooked.

In this research, I have placed my interest in boundaries next to my interest in culture and creativity, next to my interest in the word *betweenness*, and finally next to my interest in the concept of betweenness as it has previously been put to use. As we have seen, I was familiar with the literature on betweenness, but did not feel that it satisfied the way the concept needed to be explored and the way I needed to use it. I knew that there was something that could not be described in regard to sensate awareness through experience. I felt that boundaries were necessary, but problematic as well. Together these variables and circumstances resulted in this thesis.

Betweenness, however, was a term that helped me to conceptualise my questions about the differences and boundaries between things – man and woman for example – while also allowing me to see through to the bigger issues of betweenness unframed by the presence of two: betweenness when it is considered outside the parameters of frames. What is betweenness? The short answer to that question is that it is something one may sense, but not pin down with words. It is unrepresentable; the long answer is the subject of this thesis.

## **Drawing – a reader's guide to the thesis**

In the writing that follows, I introduce the concept of drawing. The notion of drawing has provided me with a conceptual scaffold and a medium through which I can begin to communicate betweenness. Or, it may be that I am using drawing as a device through which I can *communicate* betweenness, or it may be a metaphor *for* betweenness. This background discussion of drawing seeks to provide the reader with solid ground on which to approach the creative writing and the conceptual and imaginary illustrations that follow. There are no tricks in this writing; I would simply like you to have a base from which to proceed into spatially less grounded territory.

To draw is to erode or build upon a surface; it is to make a mark that one can interpret or sense. Drawing is intrinsic to human culture and communication and has its origins in the earliest of human being on Earth. Marks made in the sand, dust or

mud by a finger or stick may be the original story telling device or mapmaking technique. Drawings on the skin made with mud or pigment carry meaning that may be felt as well as read. “The idea and execution of drawing has remained unchanged for thousands of years” and as a result, “it is an activity that connects us directly in an unbroken line with the first human who ever sketched in dirt or scratched the wall of a cave” (Dexter 2005, p. 6). “[Drawing]... is far older than any written language or architecture. It is as old as song. If art in the Palaeolithic caves isn’t a form of drawing – what else can we call it[?]... drawing is as fundamental to the energy which makes us human as singing and dancing” (Berger 2005, pp. 109-110). Indeed, “[d]rawing is part of what it means to be human” (Dexter 2005, p. 6) and, thus, while the specific scope of drawing as a practice has shifted in significance through various stages of history, drawing’s somewhat elusive and primordial nature sustains its presence as a still foundational practice in the contemporary world.

The significance of drawing lies in the capacity to both convey and generate meaning. This occurs through the process of making marks. In technical terms, drawing is the erosion of one material either *onto* or *into* another – like charcoal onto paper. Or conversely, the pressure of less erodible material objects applied to more erodible surfaces – like a stick in the sand or stainless steel onto copper. To draw is to make an impression; to mark in such a way that a record is made of your movement – however (im)permanent, like the trail of grey gas that follows a plane as it arcs across the sky. Drawing is also, however, to draw forth, to elucidate, to coax and to pull – as one draws water from a well. The point of the pencil, the end of the stick that cuts the ground, the exhaust of the plane or the wheels of a bicycle as it travels out of a puddle all extend into the present moment. According to Taylor (2008, p. 11), by its very action to draw is to be “striving to investigate an elusive world just beyond ... reach”. To draw is to mark and convey, but within the moment between marking and conveying there is something that cannot be described – Derrida (1993) refers to this fleeting moment between past and future as “blind”. The simultaneity contained within the space of leaving behind a record of one’s movement and coaxing forth an idea creates an opportunity to focus on what that exact tension, space or process might be – or what it might allow.

The exact moment of the tension between making a mark and drawing forth an idea is the moment of ‘now’. As the pencil moves across the paper the point is not visible to the drawer. According to Derrida, in his essay *Memoirs of the Blind*, when an artist draws a line:

... the instant when the point of the pencil...touches the... paper, the artist does not see the point on which the point marks; he [or she] is blind to this point – and what the artist has just drawn... falls... into the past. The “source point,” the point’s point is always invisible for him [or her] (Escoubas 2006, p. 205).

It is an interesting and informative experience to draw a line with these thoughts in mind. May I offer this opportunity for you to now take a pencil and to draw a line on the page below? Concentrate on the point of the pencil on the surface of the paper. The following space (see Figure 1) has been left open for this purpose.

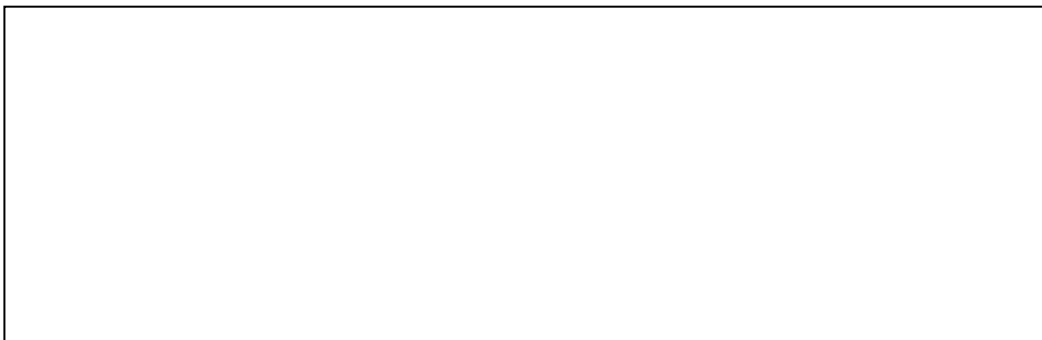


Figure 1. The readers’ drawing of a single line.

Personally, I have found the vantage point of focusing on the pencil point to be somewhat liberating. When the line seeks to become something else – particularly something other than a straight line – it is as if my thinking oscillates back and forth between the path taken and the path still to be drawn. When I focus on the point of the line, it instantly disappears. The very moment of appearance is a simultaneous disappearance – it is a memory. Artist Paul Klee described the process of such free drawing as you may have just done above as “[a]n **active line on a walk, moving**



freely, without goal. A walk for a walk's sake. The mobility agent is a point, shifting its position forward" (Klee 1968, p. 16 emphasis in the original). Observing one's sensations, thoughts and feelings throughout the process of taking a line for a walk, or actively trying to observe one's blind spot brings to the fore the way that people operate, oscillating between memories of the past and hopes for the future. When the line does more than follow along in a straight trajectory – if it persists with its linearity, but is permitted to change direction and to arc back over itself, more than oscillating – I find myself flitting back and forth, using the past to inform and guide the future movement of the line (see Figure 2).

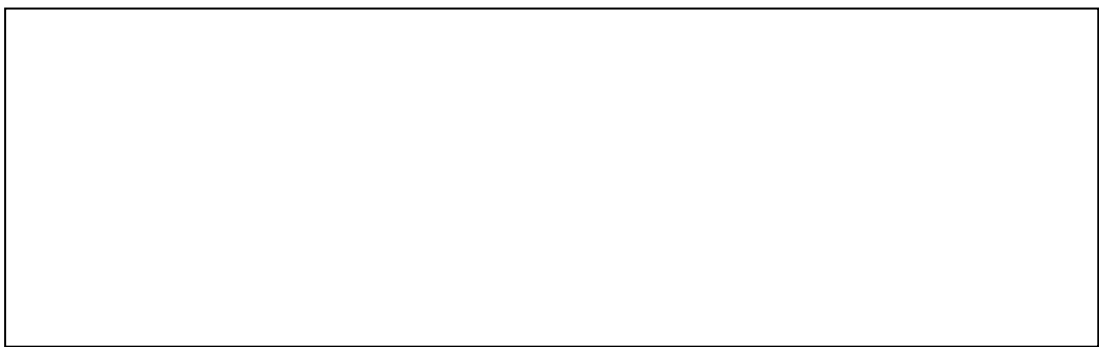


Figure 2. The writer's drawing of a single line with direction change.

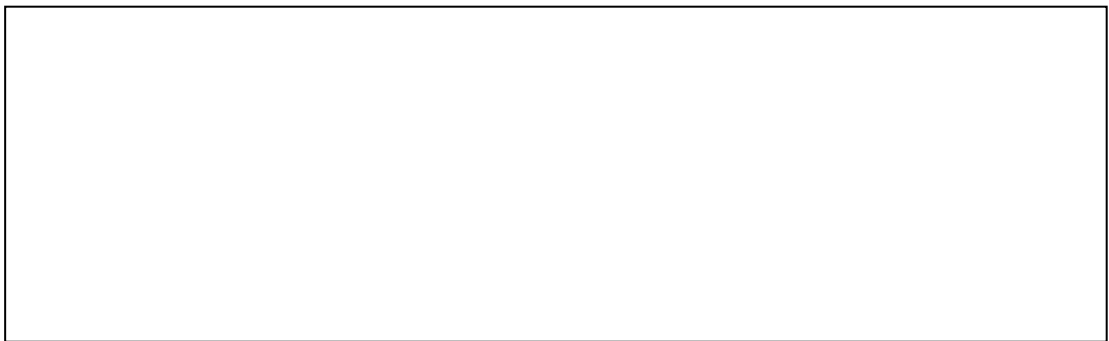


Figure 3. The reader's drawing of a simple line with direction change.

These exercises may seem elementary; after all, drawing is an activity that adults have, in various forms, participated in since childhood. To draw a line and focus intently on the movement of the mark is something so elemental, so 'scaled back', that something new may be expected. The next stage in these drawing exercises is to

try to draw *something*. This I will ask you to consider in words rather than actual performance. It is then possible to extrapolate the process of drawing a line to drawing a tree, in much the same way that we focused on the point of the pencil as it marked the page. The act of drawing, unless one is wholly without sight, is thus a process of looking. “To draw is to look, examining the structure of appearances. A drawing of a tree shows, not a tree, but a tree-being-looked-at” (Berger 2005, p. 71). To draw from memory is also to look; it is to scan one’s mind for the form or line that one wishes to explore.

To mark a page with a single line is to begin a drawing; the second line, however, carries a greater significance:

Then, when I crossed the body to mark the outline of the far shoulder, yet another change occurred. It was not simply like putting another fish into the tank. The second line altered the nature of the first. Whereas before the first line had been aimless, now its meaning was fixed and made certain by the second line. Together they held down the edges of the area between them, and the area, straining under the force which had once given the whole page the potentiality of depth, heaved itself up into a suggestion of solid form. The drawing had begun (Berger 2005, p. 6).

Many would agree that drawing is a difficult thing to do. It is associated with the work of children (who are less self conscious) and creatives, many of whom develop their talent and thus focus on drawing as part of a career. The reason why drawing is challenging is, perhaps, because drawing is more complicated than it first might seem. Drawing, and particularly drawing in a manner that drawers (and/or others) recognise as satisfying and fulfilling, or part of the human aesthetic tradition, occurs within a compendium of nuanced interminglings and associations – many of which have not yet been written or thought. These interminglings and associations are part of what I refer to as the betweenness and, thus, may never be written or thought; they may be skirted around, reified or felt – but never represented. Drawing has a long association with the magical and has been referred to as a “ghost subject”; that is,

“before drawing evolved into a “questioning” of something visibly there, it was a way of addressing the absent, of making the absent appear” (Berger 2005, pp. 109-110). To mark a surface has been a means to bring into being that which was previously un-drawn and un-known.

The significance of drawing as something verging on the magical, as something that cannot be rationalised, is what has already made drawers draw and this is still so in the present day. This may be true of other art forms, but commencing the discussion with drawing brings the story of this research back to its primitive gestation. While the act and comprehension of drawing struggles to be rationalised, it can, however, be realised and, thus, performed and explored. It is an act of striving across the edge of the known; flirting with the unknown. Petherbridge (2008, p. 37) describes drawing as “immanence, always pointing to somewhere else...”, and Berger (2005, p. 3) suggests that “[f]or the artist drawing is discovery”. To draw, however, is difficult. It is challenging to interrogate a subject, to make, coalesce and assemble many tiny glances such that they might resemble “a totality rather than a fragment” (Berger 2005, p. 71). Inhabiting the edge can be exhilarating and painful at the same time:

Image-making begins with interrogating appearances and making marks. Every artist discovers that drawing – when it is an urgent activity – is a two-way process. To draw is not only to measure and put down, it is also to receive. When the intensity of looking reaches a certain degree, one becomes aware of an equally intense energy coming towards one, through the appearance of whatever it is one is scrutinizing ... The encounter of these two energies, their dialogue, does not have the form of question and answer. It is a ferocious and inarticulated dialogue. To sustain it requires faith. It is like a burrowing in the dark, a burrowing under the apparent. The great images occur when the two tunnels meet and join perfectly. Sometimes when the dialogue is swift, almost instantaneous, it is like something thrown and caught.

I offer no explanation for this experience, I simply believe very few artists will deny it. It's a professional secret (Berger 2005, p. 77).

“Something thrown and caught” (Berger 2005, p. 77): Berger would understand my project. It is not that I want to describe betweenness by what it is not. It is more that I need to trace the outline of betweenness through a series of metaphors and images, exercises and examples through which the reader will glean an understanding. Some of the things I present will be starkly different from what has preceded them; they may be out of order; they may be present in places that academic knowledge does not consider appropriate. But they will be there, and they have the opportunity to offer the reader a sense of what it is that I seek to convey.

### What I'm asking you to do is this...

Given that betweenness is something that one cannot definitively represent, how does one go about the process of *giving presence* to the betweenness? In the context of visual art, I have made reference to my own personal experiences of finding and then searching for *something*, in painting, installation, sculpture (for example), that I find compelling; something that I have struggled to describe; that I have continued to seek out in artistic excursions – both my own creative process and those of others. However, after some years of following this as a process and a set of experiences, I began to encounter the same or similar sensation in other art forms. After much closed-eye daydreaming, I was able to ascertain that I was making *out* from these events. I was using my experience and my memory to create from the event. I was translating the events into lines in my mind; in effect, I was drawing the performance of event – not with a pencil on paper however, but with a trace in my mind. These experiences have been translated below into a user's guide for this thesis.

In this thesis, *drawing* is the approach that I have adopted and adapted to gather, to skirt around, and to convey the thing I have described above as being akin to *blue*. The process of applied drawing; that is, the theory of drawing applied through a different medium – that of the text – is the means through which the reader can

access the thing, the experience, the *blue* that I have been chasing along my path through arts-based creative culture – and is now the thing that I seek to convey to you. In this thesis, I am asking you to travel with me on a journey. It is a journey that I will narrate and you read – hearing the words in your thinking mind. In the process of your reading I will take you *somewhere*. The tools that I will utilise to make this possible I have drawn from the literature on the process of *drawing*.

In reading this thesis I am asking you to be open to, to attempt to permit, what the process of drawing *does* to the drawer. To draw begins with the process of opening yourself to being receptive to what is before you:

Following up its logic in order to check its accuracy, you find confirmation or denial in the object itself or in your memory of it. Each conformation or denial brings you closer to the object, until finally you are, as it were, inside it: the contours you have drawn no longer marking the edge of what you have seen, but the edge of what you have become. Perhaps that sounds needlessly metaphysical. Another way of putting it would be to say that each mark you make on the paper is a stepping-stone from which you proceed to the next, until you have crossed your subject as though it were a river, have put it behind you (Berger 2005, p. 3).

This is a process that takes time, and in some way relies on the time of your life thus far. The dissertation relies not only on the words presented before you; it relies on you, the reader – you are the drawer, this thesis is the thing being drawn. I, my ideas, are presented here for you (as a researched and supported thesis) just as if I were standing in a field with a beautiful landscape stretching beyond, and you sitting in a chair with a favourite pencil and a ream of cotton paper.

It is not a simple task to make writing that is able to convey the richness and depth of the process of making a drawing. You, the reader (whether you are or are not a person who draws, with or without intensity), are required to trust the literature on drawing; because it is upon this that the process of reading with a drawerly mind sets

hinges. The reader is required to trust that what they read will contain something underline within the text – just as an object being drawn is revealed through the drawing. It is not that you will be reading between the lines, it is more that you will be translating a process from one mode to another.

That is not to say that my writing will be particularly beautiful or special: “[t]o draw well, you have to forget the beauty” (Berger 2005). More, the things you are gleaning will be woven within the story and between participants and my own ideas – and accessible through meanings inherent within word combinations, patterns, sentences, storylines, images and quotations. It will be more than what is written. This thesis not only acknowledges your thinking, imagining mind – it relies heavily upon it.

My hope for you and this thesis is that you will be left with something; a line, a scent, a colour, a trace – a sense of something, something that you cannot put words to, but know is there. In a sense, I am presenting for you *something akin to blue*. In giving presence to the process of my chasing, I hope that you too might participate in the chase, and come to understand the nature of the pursuit. In the traditional spirit of drawing, however, the reader will be offered a ‘post-scriptive’ space to make actual marks on a page.

## **In what follows...**

In the following chapters, we too will go on a journey of sorts, meandering through a number of vantage points, all contributing to a drawing of betweenness that will be left as a trace in your mind. Between each of the chapters is an interlude. These interludes are from the sketchbook of *my* journey that I made each working day between my home and the university. The interludes, while often short in length, are important sites of otherness in the thesis; they provide satellite forms that help the reader to take their mind elsewhere and thereby create the spaces for betweenness in their imaginary.

In Chapter 2, the research anchors itself in the dynamic and complex discipline of geography. In this chapter, I explain how I became a geographer and how geography and I have woven together to shape these ideas. In addition, I discuss the qualitative methodological approach I have used to explore the concept of betweenness. Through the use of autoethnography and in-depth, open-ended and semi-structured interviews I have gathered the evidence to support the key arguments (and mark-making tools) of the thesis.

In Chapter 3, the theoretical base of the research through the concepts of place, representation, non-representation theory, the everyday and the nature of journeying are explored. Each of these subjects helps to construct the conceptual scaffolding for betweenness and point to how and why it might be drawn. The chapter considers the concept of place as “bounded openness” (Malpas 2012), the inherent slipperiness of representation, the not-gone-far-enough non-representation theory, the under-acknowledged everyday and the ways lines, journeying and experience come together and are oriented amongst one another to hint at their role in conveying betweenness.

In Chapter 4, the thesis investigates the concept of creativity, both of itself and as it relates to betweenness. In doing so, the creative practices of poetry, dance and architecture are given presence (in writing) as possible instances where betweenness may be present (and thus drawn). This section functions a little like the interludes in that it seeks to illuminate betweenness in another form; a different shape and texture to the way it has been given presence thus far. It is part of the larger drawing of betweenness and, while discrete, it also functions as part of the whole picture.

Chapter 5 conveys the results of the thesis; it is where the data is woven into three narratives that give some weight and depth to the flightiness and ethereal qualities of betweenness. These, if you like, are the drawing’s heavy textured lines, circular and punchy. They pull at the shading already put down, and seek to ground the thesis in the real worlds of creative people. That said, those creatives lift the lines off the page

with every quotation and are held to the page only by the structure, provided by the writer, in which they are cased.

In Chapter 6, the thesis is grounded in what it has done and tried to do. It is rolled and tied in a neat package and handed to the reader. It is here that the reader may relax into the comfort of familiar thesis writing and get a stronger sense of what the journey has been about. The emergent nature of the thesis has been entirely intentional, just as a journey reveals itself through its own unfolding. I can only hope that it is a pleasant one. Bon voyage.



## Interlude: I journey by boat...

*Heading up-river in the tinny I'm almost always the passenger of late – since the birth of our second child. The first-born is curled up in his little nook in the bow, out of the wind, straight to sleep on the floor pretty much as soon as the motor starts. He's got his life jacket on which makes a kind of portable bed. The baby's too small for a life jacket, so I keep her close to my chest. It's easiest just to feed her while we're going along. Plucking her off my nipple brings great relief, though she looks for it again... I'm a human dummy.*

*Ben is watching the path of the river in front, keeping an eye out for any other boats... and their wake, and negotiating the various buoys and signs along the way. I can relax with great trust – we've done this journey many times. And this evening there are no complicating extras like an electrical storm, heavy rain, strong wind, or wind against tide. The sky is clear and the air is still. It's that time of day where the sky seems soft, the colours merging into each other.*

*We've spent lots of time on different parts of the river at different times. Moving house more than twelve times over several years, all offshore houses. Some of those boat journeys linger in my mind. Moving house the first time, when it was just Ben and I in a six foot tinny with a four-horsepower motor, we were loaded to the hilt, with so little freeboard we were doomed had we passed another boat. I think back for a moment to all the various boats we've had... always getting bigger as our family grows. Ben has a lovely thing of setting me up with an armchair in the middle of the piles of boxes and bags like some Cleopatra of the river – or Lucinda Leplastrier.*

*It's always windy in the moving boat and often sunny. The boat is open to the weather. Facing backwards the wind is less, though the motor sounds are quite clear. Sometimes I make vocal sounds in harmony with the motor. I forget that the distinction between the two sounds is quite clear from a distance. When we are at*

*home we hear people going past in their boats, shouting over the din of the motor and barely able to hear each other – but we can hear every word clear as a bell.*

*Facing backwards towards where we've been is a nice thing to do. On perfectly still days the water is a millpond and various shades of matt green, curving around the hills and trailing off into small bays and rivulets. Scallops of land push into the river, some of them cleared of trees. It's so easy to imagine groups of people – families – resting, talking, on the earthen nodes. It would be a good place to sit; you can see both ways up the river and often for some distance. It makes me sad to see the absence.*

*As the boat moves along, its natural shape pushes water out of our way. It makes ripples that fan out, but it also makes a single line that is continuous over a distance. The water that is the wake is a different colour to the river. The line is white. As we move along the river, the line that we leave follows the bends in the river – a long white line that slowly dissipates; the frothy bubbles subside and the line turns back to the colour and form of the river.*



Figure 4. Lines on the river (Edmont 2009)

*Making a mark on the river as we do reminds me how fleeting all things are. We are here now, drawing a line, pushing water out of the way. I've kept this in mind.*

# Chapter 2: Research origins and design

## **I'm a geographer...**

As a discipline, geography has had a meandering, many-stranded discursive trajectory. Agnew (2012, p. 514) suggests that “[p]art of becoming a professional geographer involves induction into the discipline’s perpetual identity crisis”. As a geographer, one is always in the process of evaluating where one fits in the discipline, borrowing from this or that debate (underpinned by philosophy; Hubbard *et al.* 2002) to create and update one’s ongoing, ever evolving personal discursive genealogy. In formal terms, this genealogical trajectory becomes one’s ontology.

New information – debates and new ideas that trickle through the discursive setting – enter the geographer’s intellectual *kit*. This information is then considered through the genealogical *filter*. The process of filtration involves the consideration and either dismissal or storage of new information in the *kit*. Stored information that is retained for future use may be applied at later dates to confirm or disconfirm future information. When this process moves from the individual to construct a discursive collective of geographers, the consensus or majority view is called a paradigm. This generalised body of ideas, or paradigm, is able to evolve and shift as each individual makes their own personal interpretation or applies the set of ideas in a different way (Hubbard *et al.* 2002):

Moving from one paradigm to another demands a fundamental re-conceptualization of the world by academics – they need to look at the world in a new way and learn a new language for talking about it... this assertion resonates with... the history of geography, as many thinkers in geography have argued (at various times) that their way of looking at the

world represents the most meaningful, progressive and correct way of doing geography... (Hubbard *et al.* 2002, pp. 23-24).

Decisions are constantly being made that place the individual geographer in the context of the discourse(s) (dominant or otherwise) and allow a sense of belonging within the discipline. In effect, the geographer carries a mosaic of understanding that, while not fixed, does hold a record of what has been (and has been advocated) before – a genealogy story.

At any moment during this process there may be several discourses that are vigorously promoted by the most outspoken and prestigious academics/intellectuals. These become the most ‘believable’ positions at that point in time, and they attract the most followers. They become the *dominant* discursive paradigms. As an individual geographer, one must ascertain where one is ontologically placed in regard to these dominant discourses. As more individuals advocate an alternative discourse, the balance may be tipped, such that what was once considered the most correct, reasonable or believable way of doing geography is changed. Sometimes, even when a discourse is popular, it may not endure and may dissolve – considered (often brutally) as a passing fad. Others take hold, challenging what has come before and evolving over many decades. Some lose their title as such, yet still permeate other discourses.

It is the role of geographers to imagine, conceptualise, represent and construct the relationships between people and their surroundings (Hubbard *et al.* 2002). The geographer weaves together theoretical perspectives and the practical, physical demonstrations of those perspectives, with their own imaginings, ideas, vantage points and experiences. As a result of these weavings, geographers are able to advance current perspectives and generate new theoretical proposals that further intellectual understandings of the relationships between people and the places in which they interact. This process can continue *ad infinitum*.

## Why am I a geographer?

My particular path through academia involved being nurtured as a geographer, by a geographer. I was inspired by a particular mentor<sup>1</sup> with whom I then studied Honours. The ethical base to which I was inducted included an espousal of “[s]ocial justice, ecological sustainability, tolerance of diversity and economic equity” (Howitt 2001b, p. 238), while the medium through which such ethical objectives were approached was through Indigenous issues – more specifically, through the Aboriginal Australian people, their rights and the ways they are represented, understood and given presence both on the ground in terms of land rights and in the academic and popular discourse. While Aboriginal people have been his focus, it is his quest to *unbind Australian geographical imaginations* (Howitt 2001b) that has been paramount and profound. As a result of this formative influence and the way that it played into my lived trajectory, I was able to adopt and adapt these conceptual *tools* and apply them to my own area of interest – that of arts-based creative culture.

Through this discursive journey, the path of my life as a geographer has allowed me to apply my philosophical understanding to my relationships with grounded place. Through both philosophy and grounding in place I have been able to develop and apply my ethical understanding of the world. I *read*, I *think* and I *do*. Each of these, reading, thinking and doing, shapes each other and pushes each other along.

I am *still* a geographer because the things that I have gleaned along the way have furthered and enhanced my understanding of what it means to be a geographer – what it is possible to *do* as a geographer. Geography works with and enhances my intellectual and ethical trajectory as a person. Further to this, my contribution to the world *as* a geographer is an opportunity to offer the perspectives I have gleaned. I am inspired to be a geographer because geography enables me to aspire to, evolve and deliver an ethically satisfying perspective and presentation to the world (and *with* the

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Richie Howitt, who continues to influence undergraduates, postgraduates and geography colleagues at Macquarie University, Sydney.

world) in the form of my writing. By *aspiration* I refer to the process of my learning – the quest, if you like, that opens the possibility for my development as a social and ethical human being. Geography supplies a particular lens and way of looking at the world. It is a lens that permits a conscience – geography facilitates new ways of seeing and being, understanding and practicing in the world. It is a lens that carries an ability to locate oneself as a person, a being, who is immersed in particular places and thus place more generally. Geography offers a mingled space of theory and the ground, the field, the intimate spaces where the world is produced.

Geographers over time have acknowledged misgivings, accepted criticism when it was due and shifted methodical processes accordingly. My particular trajectory through this was to draw on relevant material in feminist debates, Marxism, post-colonialism, and issues of race and gender. In my own interest in place, the arts and cultural geography, I have sought to be abreast of relevant discourse and to perform in accordance with ethical best practice. My desire and ability to do this inspires my continued self-location within geography.

Perhaps it is no surprise that Australian geographers in particular seek to develop and sustain “[s]ocial justice, ecological sustainability, tolerance of diversity and economic equity” (Howitt 2001b, p. 238) and best ethical practice. Given Australia’s controversial heritage in regard to ways in which both Aboriginal people and the Australian landscape have been conceptualised from the very beginning of colonisation, Australian geographers with a theoretical and grounded approach to the discourse on colonialism have no option *but* to perform – to the best of their ability – in an ethical manner. This is not to say that geographers are unanimous in their intellectual perspectives. On the contrary, as Agnew (2012, p. 514) suggests, “[m]uch of what joins us together is our talking and writing collectively about how we differ”. Being the best geographer that I can be requires, demands even, a scepticism towards dominant modes of thinking. The habit of critical inquiry mandates such a stance.

This leads me to the next section. Our intellectual responsibility is to produce ideas that matter. To do this, we need to build thoughtfully (not slavishly) on traditions and critically engage with them from positions of confidence and an understanding of these traditions (Howitt, 2009). I have tried to do this, and in so doing I have gravitated to the idea of doing things in different, albeit complementary ways.

## **I'm a geographer but...**

I am also an artist. Most recently however, as a PhD candidate my practice as an artist has been somewhat piecemeal. My partner, a painter, sculptor and installation artist, shares my understanding and prioritisation of arts-based networks and thus we manage to amalgamate life with an artistic practice – though it is mostly his at present. With small children and a PhD, arts-based professional practice might, just now, best be described as a dedicated hobby. However, as with most art practitioners, almost everything I do is run through the filter of art. Second to my partner and children, art is my passion and my joy. I make things (often sharing my materials with children); I go out of my way to experience art through exhibitions and performances; and I read and research online. More importantly in the context of this thesis, I run my intellectual ideas through the lens of art, just as I do with geography.

The ideas for this thesis have grown out of a professional practice – both geographical and arts-based. At the University of Tasmania, all candidates undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Research Degree are required to produce a *thesis*. The criteria of this thesis are that the candidate undertake a “[program of advanced study on a subject approved by the board, and present for examination a thesis that – \(a\) embodies the results of the research; and \(b\) unless the Board decides otherwise, includes substantial written work](#)” (Academic Senate 2009, p. 11, see Appendix A), whilst “[t]he [length and precise format of the written thesis are not prescribed. Information on these matters will be provided by each school during induction sessions for new graduate research candidates, and this information will be updated as appropriate](#)” (Board of Graduate Research 2008, p. 6). As part of my

induction to the School of Geography and Environmental Studies it was suggested that a written thesis is expected to be between eighty and one hundred thousand words in length.

However, not all disciplines are considered in the same manner and some disciplines have their own examination criteria, as modified to suit the specific requirements of differing forms of practice. In some disciplines, such as Fine Art and Music, “the thesis may include other material, such as an exhibition of works of art, craft or design; compositions or performances. These will generally be supported by a written document contextualising and elucidating the body of work presented” (Board of Graduate Research 2005a, see Appendix B). In the School of Art, University of Tasmania, Doctor of Philosophy (Fine Art) candidates complete an independent body of work which is also described as a thesis. For Fine Art candidates, the Rules of Higher Degree by Research use ‘thesis’ to mean “the collection of materials submitted for examination by the candidate (Rule 113.2.1). The thesis may be submitted in one of two formats: *Exhibition and exegesis* or *theoretical thesis*” (see Appendix B). In the case of Doctor of Philosophy (Visual Arts), the exegesis is expected to “elaborate, elucidate and place in context the exhibited group of art works... [t]he exegesis is in no sense a separate exercise in art theoretical discourse ... the exegesis would not be expected to exceed ...20,000 words” (see Appendix B). The reason given for the requirement of the exegesis is that “works of art cannot always present this information without ambiguity” (see Appendix B). Further to this, it is stated that “it is appropriate that a written component is included with the exhibition of works. This written component is termed the exegesis. It is not examined as a separate work but must be considered with the exhibition, which contains the substantive original discourse of the thesis” (see Appendix B).

Given that my research looks at how things are practiced, given presence and represented, it was my original intention to elucidate what I had sensed could not be represented with words alone by making objects which could assist in the interpretation of the ideas contained in the thesis. The works were intended to be part



of the thesis – not examined as a separate work – but, rather, to work with the written component to assist in their interpretation and understanding. Just as a work of art cannot explain all that is required, in this case the words alone could not convey the meaning of the work.

Having consolidated my research topic in the form of a Preliminary Research Plan, I made a written request, with the support of my supervisor, to the Board of Graduate Studies by Research “to explore the betweenness of place using media other than text” (see Appendix C, personal details omitted). It was my intention to switch the ratio of art work to written work found in the examination criteria of the Fine Arts PhD. That is, it was my idea to write a thesis of sixty thousand words and to submit art works to assist in the interpretation of the words. Though both letters were presented to the full Board of Graduate Research my request to produce art works to assist in the representation of my ideas was denied. I was offered an alternative, one that cuts to the heart of representation as a concept that I was seeking to explore:

Therefore, the Members of the Board did not approve the submission of the final thesis in a form that differed from the usual practice adopted within the School. However, the Members wished to encourage you to consider as part of the process of research education, the mounting of an exhibition of your work for members of the public that is not examinable and to consider the possibility of including photographs of the exhibition within the thesis or the inclusion of a CD in the back cover of the thesis as part of the materials provided to examiners (Board of Graduate Research 2005b, see Appendix D).

The request was declined, then, with the advice that I may, however, make the work, exhibit the work, photograph the work and put it in the back of the thesis jacket, though it would not be examinable. The reasons for this decision were not stated.

The second application I made was to the Graduate Research Coordinator (GRC) of the School of Art in Hobart. At this meeting I made a request to conduct my PhD

through the School of Art. I put my request to the GRC, with the systems in the School of Art already in place to manage the production of art works and the engagement of examiners qualified to manage the assessment of art works. On this occasion I was told that I would not be able to change to the School of Art because I had not previously completed an undergraduate degree in Fine Art. I was also told that I would not be able to have studio space at the School of Art. Because I was requesting to complete the majority of the thesis in the form of the written word (sixty percent) and only a small percentage as arts works, I would be considered a theoretical doctoral candidate and thus not eligible for a studio – only an office. This response made it plain that crossing between art and geography was not as straightforward as the current discourse on the relationships between art and geography might suggest (O'Sullivan 2001; McCormack 2002; Cancienne and Snowber 2003; Phillips 2004; Butler 2006; Cant and Morris 2006; Foster and Lorimer 2006; Butler 2007; Wood *et al.* 2007; Merriman and Webster 2009; Ellis *et al.* 2011; Dixon *et al.* 2012; Tolia-Kelly 2012)

In the School of Geography at the University of Tasmania I made an attempt to extend the discourse further than the University was ready to accept. It may have been the case that in the early stages of the research, at the time when these kinds of arrangements need to be negotiated, I was not able to articulate the concept with enough clarity to convince the Board of Graduate Studies to accept my request, and that the development of the art-geography discourse was not yet sufficiently articulated to support such flexibility. However, the rejection presented several new possibilities as the candidature evolved. Now that I knew more about where the boundaries lay, and what the restrictions might be, I was able to apply my creative energies with more precision and alacrity.

The first phase of this new development was to curate an exhibition of my participants' work – asking each participant to reflect, in their own specific medium and discourse on the idea of betweenness. On contact, ten of the sixteen participants agreed to produce work for the exhibition. I attended workshops on grant writing in the visual arts and I contacted an established curator to act as a mentor who provided

substantial and specific advice for my project. I also set about collecting materials and making art works for my own inclusion in this exhibition. My own submission to the exhibition was to be twofold: firstly, it was my intention to print my written thesis and to cut it into one line strips and glue them to the walls in one long consecutive line such that the thesis might be read by following the line as it wound in a looping line around the gallery.

The second work was to consist of my own (now retired) 1969 HK Holden with two doors on one side open. Inside, the car was to be lined with the skins of all the animals that I had collected, skinned, processed and then fixed to the inner surfaces of the car. The viewer would then enter the car to sit in a plush interior with every surface except the windows, mirrors and instrument panels covered with beautiful soft fur. If the viewer chose to read the accompanying descriptive material, they would discover that the furs were those of road-killed animals.

While I was resigned to the idea that I would be required to document the works and display them as an appendix, I rather thought that idea amusing – given that these would be labour intensive, high-quality art works, yet relegated to an appendix. As a result I acquired permission from the (then) Department of Primary Industry, Water and Energy to collect road-kill for the purpose of art works. I collected over eighty animals of which I skinned and salted ten. I used a video camera to make recordings of myself performing the skinning and disposing of the carcasses and I wrote extensively about my feelings while performing these acts.

However, again I was to find myself frustrated. This phase of the work was suspended when I became pregnant with my daughter, and it was suggested that I restrict all interaction with road-kill and the handling of their skins until I had finished breastfeeding my child. It was determined that the chemicals used for tanning were too risky in these circumstances. As an artist working in a geography department the management of the project erred on the precautionary. Again, the project was required to shift.

## Dissent: personal, academic, methodological and otherwise

During pregnancy and post-birth, rather than focusing on the artworks that I had planned to construct, curate and exhibit, I focused entirely on the written component of the thesis. I had always intended to allow the thesis to *do what it suggests can be done*, but had not developed a firm framework for how this would happen. My first series of thoughts (and research) involved the movement of the entire methodology and methods sections to an appendix, or their exclusion from the thesis altogether. My rationale for this was that a creative work of any kind does not require an explanation as to its origins. Imagine a poet writing that ‘this poem was constructed while sitting in the bath... though its origins may be found on a plane journey traversing the geographical edge of Alaska... my interest in edges can be found in the works of William Shakespeare...’. It is more likely that the reader must find these nuances in the poem; the poem speaks its own genealogy story – or, the collected works of a poet tell a broader picture of the artist than a discreet work. Constructing the story of the artist is a case of joining the dots and, thus, much may be left to the imagination. Writing my own thesis, I felt, required the same quality found in creative works, an *unknown* intensity; a *veiled* quality, if it were to succeed in presenting what, albeit, I was still searching for – and what, indeed, may be unrepresentable.

The emergent nature of the research process meant that at this point I was (still) chasing the “[something akin to blue](#)” (see page 16) that I had both experienced and sought out over decades in response to arts-based creativity. Leaving out the methodology, however, was something that met with strong resistance from the supervisory team. I was prepared to risk seven years of (part-time) work to submit something that I truly believed in, but my supervisors took a much more cautious line. Again I needed to pull back, to restrain my ideas – I had taken too big a step. However, in developing my understanding of qualitative research and methodologies, and furthering the reading of my ideas through the methodological literature, I began to see that it would be *desirable* to configure my thesis around a

methodology. As I progressed even deeper with my methodological understanding, I came to adopt the position that the methodology (indeed, this writing) was an imperative – how could I hope to convey to the reader the ontological and epistemological scope of the work without such a background, framework and grounding. While it would undoubtedly make of the thesis something entirely different, the methodology was now a tool for developing research questions and assisting the research to emerge – though with its guts on the outside. It was to be written into being as a technical document – rather than a dream to entice. While this might seem to be a process of giving up, giving in, in fact it has added power to an otherwise gentle and evocative journey – one that I would argue has great capacity to induce change, but one that is not (yet) afforded space within an academic setting. By adding this scaffolding, I hope to have given power to future writers, doctoral candidates, by establishing a base from which they may fly.

The need for a methodology is simply put: if you do not *share* my world-view, then you are likely to be left confused about what it is I have done – and why. The methodology can provide the reader with a set of reasons for my having chosen to do what it is that I have done – what kind of life circumstances, intellectual grounding, stories and choices have allowed me to take the path that you find here and in the pages to follow. The methodology is, thus, both necessary and adding value to the work.

Thus, the methodology came to be an important component of this work. I have written a thesis explaining what I did, what the outcomes were and what significance these outcomes offer to the world. That said, leaving out the methodology, and writing the thesis I had dreamed of may have given the reader something far more beautiful with which to engage – and may have left you feeling something more profound, more curious, more changeling ... more blue.

None of this means that one should not challenge the role of academic and epistemological devices. The role of academia and of doctoral candidature more specifically is to make a “substantial original contribution [to knowledge] as judged

by disinterested experts” (Academic Senate 2009) – indeed, it is a requirement of the dissertation. The term *substantial* is, given my own circumstances, a term that is relevant to the discipline and school in which the work is conducted. That I was unable to produce works that could be examined *as works* in a geographical setting suggests that the disciplinary structure of academic institutions militates against ‘substantial contributions to knowledge’ (though substantial is a relative term).

The constantly shifting ground of academic knowledge is an imperative within doctoral research. The term *original* in the guidelines (above) mandates that the research presented for examination is indeed *new*. It does not refer to the taking of a step that is *too* large! Here is a requirement that valorises the very ambition in knowledge production that discipline-specific paradigms seem to dampen. In seeking to work academically with visual material, outside of a fine arts context where it has mainstream acceptance, I inadvertently highlighted this inherent tension within the academic guidelines.

I had previously produced two pieces of work for academic examination, one responding to the pedagogical approach of the lecturer, the other challenging (to some degree) the status quo of research practice. Firstly, I produced work in my final year of undergraduate study in resource management. This installation was acknowledged by Howitt (2001a, p. 153):

Natalie Smith, an accomplished visual artist, tackled the thorny question of geographical scale and the implications of cross-scale complexities in her final assignment. She approached the Buildings and Grounds Department of the university and got permission for an installation piece on the day final assessments were due. She wanted to invoke a vision of scale, interconnectedness and complexity that demonstrated why context and geography really matter in resource management.

In the first stage of the installation I exhibited several woven balls (see Figure 5) as a neat constellation. During the day I wove each of the balls around the constellation

eucalypts (see Figure 6). Howitt summarised my verbal explanation of the works on the day of examination as follows: “Ideas in the dominant culture are seen to be tightly bound, separate entities. They are hard to penetrate... and held to be categorically located in space and time in quantifiable, causal relationships with each other ... viewed from different vantage points, ideas such as scale, place, culture and landscape unravel and interweave in different ways, to present us with new ways of seeing things” (Howitt 2001c, see Figures 5 and 6).



Figure 5. Woven balls: exhibited as part of ‘Scale and Complexity Exhibition’ (Stage 1), Macquarie University, 2000.







Figure 6. Unravelled balls: exhibited as part of 'Scale and Complexity Exhibition' (Stage 2), Macquarie University, 2000.

I was examined on this installation in accordance with the overarching pedagogical philosophy of my lecturer.

The challenge of assessing this sort of work in terms of specific assessment criteria developed on the assumption that written text is the norm for university assignments raised many comments from other students and teaching colleagues. Yet the assumption that 'new ways of thinking' must, or even can, conform to existing criteria and forms is one we must allow our students to challenge. There should be no 'mould' that restricts the scope of the geographical imagination. The strength of a disciplinary framework does not lie in its ability to constrain ideas within explicit limits, [but] in its ability to provide a vantage point from which ideas can be put together coherently and rigorously in new ways (Howitt 2001a, p. 153).

The second piece of work where I challenged academic constraints on what counts as *substantial* and *original* contribution to knowledge was in my Honours research, entitled 'Infinite Cartographies of the Possible' (Smith 2001). This research was later published as *The Sydney Opera House: What's the Point?* (Smith, N 2008). My examination report was late coming back to me, due, apparently, to the examiner's uncertainty whether or not my writing constituted a thesis. This is an excerpt from my Examiner's Report (see Appendix E):



But should it be worth a First Class Honours?

The issue is really what you call a thesis, and what the genre of a thesis requires. IF it is accepted that a thesis should provide a clear argument, provide evidence for and against it, review the evidence in a balanced way, and come to conclusions based on this analysis, then she has not done this. This is the traditional science approach. But then she did not intend to do this.

IF you accept that a thesis can be creative work, that weaves together strands from different traditions, that ignores contrary or alternative viewpoints, that makes a passionate plea that goes beyond normal academic argument, then she has succeeded in pulling off a fascinating and successful work.

In a sense the answer to the question as to whether it should be given first class honours is a policy issue for your department about how you constrain the genre of the thesis. If you are prepared to accept, from time to time, a piece of work that avoids traditional conventions but makes a real contribution to knowledge, I would suggest a mark of \_  
(Anonymous 2002, mark omitted from candidate's copy).

The impression I got from my supervisor at the time was that his technique for managing me was to provide just enough barriers to my ideas to let me get through the examination process, encouraging and instilling in me the requisite respect for the disciplinary traditions through which my ideas must filter, but not so much that I lost sight of other ways of imagining the world. In part it was my ignorance that granted me the courage to take on such a task. Perhaps that is still the case today, though I do feel more constrained by my knowledge of what is possible than ever before. *Not knowing*, while the root of ignorance, grants a certain freedom.

The role of universities generally and the “global mission” of the University of Tasmania is to “create, communicate and disseminate knowledge” (Rathjen, 2011).

This is not under dispute. Institutions of higher education and learning are the *place where* and the *framework through* which many things become possible; they are the frame through which people – learners, academics and practitioners – develop their ideas into knowledge. While substantial structural scaffolding is essential to prevent dissolution into chaos, it is important to acknowledge that instruments of control are embedded and encoded within the structures, systems, process and frames through which knowledge is created. As Howitt (2001a, p. 147) states: “[w]orking in its nurturing communities, we can forget that university education is an important mechanism of cultural dominance... and social control”. While universities are essential to the creation, communication and dissemination of knowledge (Rathjen, 2011), they are also the mechanism of power through which is determined what counts as knowledge and who has access to it.

That universities can exert this power is due to the structure of Western knowledge and more specifically to the linguistic formation of dichotomies, often referred to as binaries (or dualisms). These binaries are the result of two related, though different terms being placed and understood in relation to the other term. Thus, binaries such as man/woman, light/dark, mind/body, active/ passive, real/imagined, human/non-human, culture/nature come to frame the way such entities are understood – in the context of the *other* part of the binary. This way of thinking results in a hierarchical categorisation, with one side of the binary considered to be *less than* the other side. The role of binaries in the formation of power relations has been acknowledged in academia, particularly through feminist, poststructuralist and post-colonial discourse, as those on the lesser side of the binary seek to challenge this mechanism of hierarchy and power.

In Western thought (structuralism in particular), pairs of related terms (binaries) constitute a fundamental mechanism through which meaning is created and disseminated. Rose (1999, p. 176) takes this further, arguing that “these dualities are more properly described as a series of singularities because the pole labelled ‘other’ is effectively an absence”. The effect of the binaries can be cumulative when the items on each side of the paired opposites are deemed to be mutually reinforcing:

human, male, presence, culture, strong, light (the list could be extended) on the ‘superior’ side; and non-human, woman, absence, nature, weak and dark on the ‘inferior’ side. Plumwood (1999, pp. 188-189) suggests that “[d]ominant traditions over at least twenty-five centuries have identified the human normatively with the rational, and both the non-human and the human Other with the relative absence of reason and corresponding proximity to nature and the earth”. Such groupings act to form and reinforce ways of knowing the world and have been intrinsic to the development of Western thought. Binaries are perpetuated through the accordance of power to the dominant side of the binary, helping shore up the power nodes of the dominant side via a system of positive feedback. “The closed ethical strategy of moral dualism ... appeals mostly for the wrong reasons, because it repeats a familiar but ambiguous political gesture, that of slightly expanding a privileged group while continuing or intensifying exclusion of a group of Others” (Plumwood 1999, p. 189). The very familiarity of binaries (Plumwood 1999) assists in the perpetuation of what Rose (1999), Howitt (2001a), Plumwood (1999) and others consider to be a central problem – that binaries and their intrinsic way of knowing the world are so deeply imbued that they are difficult to detect, functioning almost imperceptibly.

In line with Levinas’ philosophy of ethical alterity – an opening to and responsibility towards an-*other* – Rose (1999, p. 182) uses the term “deep colonizing”, developed through the post-colonial discourse to explain the complex set of processes through which the mechanisms set up to help Aboriginal people actually serve to reinforce injustice and discrimination: “Colonizing practices embedded within decolonizing institutions must not be understood simply as negligible side effects of essentially benign endeavours. The embeddedness may conceal, naturalize, or marginalize continuing colonizing practices” (Rose 1999, p. 182). “Deep colonizing” (Rose 1999, p. 182) practices percolate through a Western colonial way of knowing the world, superimposed over an Indigenous knowledge system that does not carry the same binary thinking. Ironically, practices of colonization “are so institutionalized in political and bureaucratic structures and policies that that they are almost unnoticed” (Rose 1999, p. 182).

Applying Rose's (1999, p. 182) term, "[deep colonizing](#)" to a broader context led me to the term *deep power*. As a student or academic, one contributes to systems of power, control and cultural dominance (Howitt 2001a) through various mechanisms of ignorance, passive acceptance and even unwitting support. However one participates, one is complicit in the construction of that power. Being alert to, questioning and challenging structures of deep power is part of the responsibility of good citizenship and ethical academic practice. As an Australian and a geographer with an open mind and sensitivity to binary thinking, deep colonizing and deep power, I am able to perceive at least some of the practices of deep power that have been intrinsic to the geographical imaginary. Being alert and responsive to *deep power* I am afforded an opportunity to question and challenge.

Within the academic setting, over the past forty years the call for change to the ways in which knowledge is created as well as what is accepted as knowledge has permeated the discursive geographical imaginary via many routes. Early geographical dissent is evident in the writings and experiences of the Russian anarchist, Peter Kropotkin, who declined the chair of Geology at Cambridge University because the position prevented him from participating as a public figure in political life (Todes 1989). In the 1960s, dissent occurred as a response to "[... politically sterile and peopleless quantitative geography](#)" (Fuller and Kitchin 2004, p. 1). The disadvantaged *other* (those on the lesser side of the binary) was given agency. Feminism, Marxism and post-colonial discourse as well as movements such as radical geography and critical geography have sought and continue to seek and challenge the embedded structural foundation of social systems and academic approaches to such issues.

More recently, however, shifts within universities towards a neo-liberal agenda have blunted the progress of these developments. According to Fuller and Kitchin (2004, p. 8):

[These two structural constraints, the desire to maintain the power of the academy in knowledge production and the desire to shape the education](#)

system for the purposes of the status quo, work to delimit and limit the work of radical/critical geographers. They pressure academics to produce certain kinds of knowledge and to undertake particular kinds of praxis.

Intimidated by the repercussions of dissent, many academics now choose to follow paths that offer the least resistance. It is without doubt that

... being an activist/academic can be an uncomfortable position, it is a role that can be constraining, it is a role that can position one awkwardly within a department/discipline that values some kinds of research more than others, and it is a role that can limit or curtail a career ... this pressure is enforced through the application of penalties. These range from constrained promotion ... and failure to secure tenure, to unofficial censorship (through papers being rejected), and so on (Fuller and Kitchin 2004, pp. 8-9).

However, regardless of the associated risks, there remains a *need* for ways of thinking that can deal with the very messiness of the world. The capacity for considered and mindful change is a fundamental component of a balanced social fabric. This is no less pertinent in the Australian context, as stated by Howitt (2001b, p. 242):

In my view, exploration of new spatial metaphors needs to displace the naive spatial certainties suggested by the notions of frontiers and boundaries that have so dominated the geographical imaginaries of many Australians. We need to confront the ambivalence and openness that is part and parcel of the complex, contingent and uncertain reality of co-existence. We need to develop a new lexicon of co-existence and explore socially, intellectually and culturally fertile edges in our real and imagined places. Integration of analyses at multiple scales to contribute to decolonisation of indigenous peoples, territories and resources are also urgently needed. In these fundamental challenges geographical research

and Australian geographers' (and anthropologists') geographical imaginations have much to offer.

The tension between ethical best practice and mediated knowledge production is ongoing. Given ideological power structures in the academy, courage and creativity in approach are required to make a difference. As Fuller and Kitchin (2004, p. 9), drawing on the work of Cloke (2004), state: "... [researchers] are finding interesting and creative ways to make their efforts 'count' inside the academy as well as outside, through, for example, commodifying their activism into academic products, securing research funding for their activist projects, or finding ways to balance different roles".

The call for change within and to discursive paradigms has been made from a range of vantage points (post-colonialism, Feminism and post-racism, among others). More specifically, calls for new methodological approaches have responded to a desire to *breach* the boundaries constructed through binary thinking (Suchet 2002); a recognition of deep power lurking beneath the surface of all transactions. There is a desire to find new ways of engaging with the world that may address these issues.

More recently, non-representational theories have sought to extend the dominant approaches to research through giving researchers a more flexible theoretical and methodological base from which to expand their research. The call to change beckons writers and academics into radically new and unknown spaces of qualitative research – how those spaces will present "is hard, though perhaps not impossible to imagine" (Davies and Dwyer 2007, p. 257) and will depend on the approach of the researcher and spaces of possibility that become available.

*Dissent, creativity and change* are related terms. Changing the ways things are imagined and done is not intended to imply an epiphanous moment or event, though "... 'resistance' is often thought in heroic terms as heroic acts by heroic people or heroic organisations" (Thrift 1997, p. 125). While every shift is a shift and all change is on a spectrum, some shifts make more wake than others. The circumstances

allowing movement into new spaces of thinking and writing occurs through subtle, profound and somewhat more playful means. Drawing on Cixous and Derrida (2002), Davies and Gannon (2005, p. 319) eloquently make the point: rather than direct opposition, the spaces of change will likely be created through a “series of escapes, of small slides, of plays, of crossings, of flights – that open (an other, slippery) understanding”. In the case of my own foray into more adventurous writing, it is a *care* for the things I am writing about rather than any confrontation that draws me forth. In this resolve I have found some support within non-representational theories.

When Anderson and Harrison (2010, p. 26), in their introduction to sixteen essays on non-representational theories, suggests that the experience was like “[t]rying to catch sea foam in the breeze”, I know exactly to what they refer. For my personal conceptualisation, I imagine *chasing something akin to blue*. Such procedures require new ways of thinking – they require creativity, openness and care on the part of the researcher *and* on the part of the reader. My writing has been constrained by a set of deep structures of power and control embedded within the university system. Academia is a system that has neither caught up with its own promise nor the discursive paradigm within which much of the geographic discourse and potentially many others disciplines sit.

As a postgraduate candidate, I find myself in the thick of research. As part of the research process I have designed the study, collected and analysed data and written many essays, some of which will be included as part of this dissertation and thus submitted for examination. As a (budding) researcher, however, I find the constraints on the structure and scope of the dissertation to be restrictive and prohibitive. Once the reader has finished reading this thesis she may begin to see that I have written it to justify a thesis that I was not permitted to write. Though I bed this idea within analysis of my data, for an explanation of this you must bear with me. What I also intend, however, is to use an idea that may be represented and its affects described, remaining elusive. For this reason the concept requires a mode of representation outside the current academic structure. Thus, the thesis provides my interpretation of

Anderson and Harrison's observation: "like ... catch[ing] sea foam in the breeze" (2010, p. 26); an elucidation of Davies and Gannon's (2005) view that the task may be slippery and playful. In terms of theoretical geography it is radical, methodologically innovative, and academically – it is not allowed.

## **Background to this research**

The origins of this doctoral research may be traced to a series of overlapping, discrete or recurring experiences for which I became interlocutor. These experiences synergised into the sensibility, relationality and awareness that I have since termed *betweenness*. While I have explored betweenness through my own art practice and personal life, the ideas have been more formally articulated through academic study and publication, most notably in my Honours research entitled 'Infinite Cartographies of the Possible' (Smith 2001). In my Honours research I explored the Sydney Opera House as an icon within the localised Sydney, broader Australian and international landscapes.

What I sought to understand in this research, however, was whether that same sense of awareness present in the Sydney Opera House may also be found on an abstract line of road in rural-remote Tasmania. Where geographers tend towards known and bounded places or groups as a way of containing or framing their collection of knowledge – the town of Cygnet for instance, or single mothers in Glenorchy – in this research, I looked to a line of road that passed through several towns and two Local Government Areas, and had no specific relevance to anyone except me. I then expanded my line of road out to include the journeys of others; but again they were journeys not relevant to anyone except them. To contextualise this, let us briefly look at the Sydney Opera House as an example of a 'high end' icon.

Built in the 1960s, the Sydney Opera House was innovative in the choice of materials, the method of construction and the design concept. The brilliance of the design is evidenced by its capacity to capture the imagination of people from all



cultures and architectural traditions. Among many significant architectural and cultural influences, Danish architect, Jorn Utzon, developed a prize-winning design concept by studying Australian cultural values and the accompanying penchant for aquatic activities like sailing, swimming and fishing. Utzon also drew on his own cultural and experiential landscapes through his use of naval charts to determine the bathymetric landscape of Sydney Harbour<sup>2</sup>. Merging bathymetric contour lines with the geographical proximity to the greater city of Sydney, Utzon harnessed geographical morphology and cultural and landscape values to bring the Sydney Opera House into being. The resulting architectural structure and the way it is perceived has become an accentuation of what was already present in the landscape – it has made Sydney Harbour and, indeed, Australia, *even better*. While this alone is an extraordinary achievement, my research revealed that on engaged inspection, however, there are additional, more subtle registers of value and affection that may also be considered. These subtleties take us back to the time of the First Fleet.

The struggle for control of land and cultural assets (both those *already* existent and those *being* established) and the ensuing relational complexities, have proved, and still prove, challenging for governance and relationships in many countries, including Australia. But what of the actual places where events occurred? In Sydney Cove, the site of first settlement<sup>3</sup>, the stories of transition allow a sense of question and possibility. The site of arrival – the bay in which the first eleven ships dropped anchor and rowed ashore, cleared vegetation, erected tents and made fires – the first breath of the new colony – occurred in a place that has been occupied by Indigenous

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<sup>2</sup> Utzon's father was a Naval Architect and Utzon himself spent many hours investigating ship design and underwater landscapes. The bathymetric charts are used to ascertain depth contours such that underwater landscapes may be safely navigated.

<sup>3</sup> First landing occurred in Botany Bay, 12 kilometres to the south of Sydney Harbour. Due to a shortage of fresh water and an exposed anchorage, Captain Phillip, in charge of the eleven ships in the First Fleet, decided to move the colony north to the deep, less exposed anchorage of Sydney Harbour.

Australians for many generations and thousands of years. When moving through this place today, how does one re-member that particular meeting – a meeting so troubled by the many ways in which it can be remembered?

At the time of first landing, Sydney Cove presented very differently to the Circular Quay of today. The finger of land now called Bennelong Point reached out, as it does now, into the harbour of Sydney<sup>4</sup>. While not always named so, and though the site of a variety of land-use practices, as a place, Bennelong Point has been geographically and culturally significant for generations. Living in a place for thousands of years will inevitably affect the land surface: clearing tracks on which to easily move from one place to another, burning to promote grassland (in turn providing habitat for herbivores and a food supply for people) and constructing shelters of varying degrees of permanence are just some of the land use facilities necessitated by the needs to eat, sleep and move about freely. Eating shellfish (as a readily available food supply) meant that shells from meals were discarded on the land adjacent to the foreshore. Over time, these shells accumulated to form mounds of shells – often up to twelve metres in height. These mounds, referred to as middens<sup>5</sup>, are still evident on beaches and rivers all over Australia. Peter Myers, a prominent Australian architect<sup>6</sup>, respectfully refers to the middens as “[shell monuments](#)” (2001, p. 199). The

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<sup>4</sup> As Sydney harbour is a submerged deep river valley, Bennelong Point may have once been a hilltop as the current foreshore was thought to be 25 km further out to sea from the present position. During the last ice-age, frozen Polar Regions locked up much of the oceanic water and sea levels were significantly lower than they are now. Over many generations, Aboriginal people would have witnessed this progression of water and the slow drowning of the valley to bring the water to its current levels. When things change ever so slightly – by a centimetre a year for example – such change cannot be detected within a lifetime. This may be thought of as the “changing-same”. Such changes may be acknowledged through stories told from one generation to the next.

<sup>5</sup> It is thought that the new colony that settled in Sydney Cove in 1788 harvested these shell middens and burnt them in kilns. The burning process produced a lime that was used as mortar for the new buildings of the colony.

<sup>6</sup> Myers worked on the design and build of the Sydney Opera House under Utzon.

Aboriginal shell middens or “[monuments](#)” that once lined the foreshore of Bennelong Point and the surrounding harbour can be interpreted, translated and acknowledged in the shape, colour and texture of the Sydney Opera House (Myers 2001). It is Utzon’s ability to capture so many of the contextual nuances (often inadvertently) that has established the Sydney Opera House as a global icon in the geographic imaginary.

Much of what I came to understand through my study of the Opera House underwrites this doctoral research. And much of what I have experienced through my exposure to arts-based creative culture (through creative cultural practice) has also been foundational to this research. By creative culture I refer to music, films, art, architecture and poetry (for example). These creative cultural practices have all influenced my understanding of *betweenness*. Each of these modes of creative expression produce culturally significant *things*: a film, a building, a theatrical performance, a painting, a novel. These artefacts are icons — they are all *things* that have been designed to play a role in the mediation of experience. Such objects, entities and performances, are contained and designed works that one may seek out for the express purpose of being *moved*, *shaped*, or *altered*, or, conversely, one may experience them without having made the choice to do so. These cultural things are icons in much the same way that the Sydney Opera House is an icon.

In this doctoral research, however, I have sought to shift focus away from the iconic and the emblematic to the much less revered – to focus my research awareness on spaces and places of the *everyday*. Within human and cultural geography, interest in the *everyday* is not new (Harrison 2000; Probyn 2004; Thrift 2004b; Heath *et al.* 2010; Martin 2011; Middleton 2011). The approach adopted here, however, is not to focus on the everyday specifically, but to use spaces of the everyday to access *betweenness*. Given its relative accessibility, the everyday might be thought to be a readily available field from which to draw one’s data. Not so. The everyday is so open-ended that possibilities seem infinite. In this research, however, narrowing the everyday down to a manageable set of parameters was not as difficult as it first might have seemed. As I travelled each day – between my home and the university – the

journey that I was making began to resonate with other aspects and ideas of *betweenness* that I had been exploring. In true serendipity, it was through the process of journeying itself that ‘journeying’ emerged as a lens through which to examine *betweenness*. In this way, the focus of my research shifted from the iconic space of the Sydney Opera House to the everyday spaces of a seemingly random, remote and apparently bland and mundane line of road between two places. Such an abstract geographical space also provided a mechanism through which artfulness could be brought into the research. Drawing boundaries around the *field* of my research, however, brought to light the geographical orientation of the study.

Geography as a discipline orients itself around the physical world and the human interactions within it; space and place are thus fundamental geographical concepts. The role of the field and field work are also fundamental to geography. Getting out into the world and experiencing worldly phenomena is a core geographic academic pursuit – it is what geographers *do*. The field that is addressed by geographers is very often informed through a scientific paradigm – the dominant discursive paradigm in contemporary academia. Through their reliance on the dominant discursive paradigm, *the field* (and the ways in which boundaries are drawn around it) is set to identify and represent particular ways of knowing the world (see Dowling and McGuirk 1998; Colls 2004; Davies 2006; Spielman and Logan 2012). By shifting the field to an abstract space of ‘the journey’ I have been able to define the parameters from which I will explore what emerges from such a novel type of bounded place – or set of places.

This project is phenomenological in nature in that it “*strives for the actualization of contact*” and “[a]s a way of study it seeks to meet the things of the world as those things are in themselves and so describe them” (Seamon 1980, p. 148). Indeed, this project is indebted to the writings of David Seamon on phenomenology, movement and the everyday. Seamon (1980, p. 148, italics in original) describes “*everyday movement in space*” as “*any spatial displacement of the body or bodily part initiated by the person himself*. Walking to the mailbox, driving home, going from house to garage, reaching for scissors in a drawer – all these behaviours are examples of

movement”. Wilde (1963, p. 20) states that “[p]henomenology seeks the essential structures of human experience”, whilst Seamon (1980, p. 148) argues that phenomenology seeks to understand the

...variety of ways [in] which men and women behave in and experience their everyday world [wherein] there are particular patterns which transcend specific empirical context and point to the essential human condition – the irreducible crux of people's life-situations which remains when all 'non-essentials' – cultural context, historical era, personal idiosyncrasies – are stripped bare through phenomenological procedures. Although it realizes [sic] that culture, history and personality no doubt filter and condition patterns of living, phenomenology holds a certain given-ness to human experience which extends beyond particular person, place or moment. The task of phenomenology is to unbury and describe the given-ness, of which people usually lose sight because of the mundaneness and taken-for-grantedness of their everyday life-situation.

It has been observed that people usually do not question and simply accept their daily existence – their *natural attitude* (Giorgi 1970), or what Seamon (1980, p. 149) terms their “*life-world*”, is unnoticed, is *deep*, it is concealed as a phenomenon. As stated by Giorgi (1970, p. 148):

In the natural attitude we are too much absorbed by our mundane pursuits, both practical and theoretical; we are too much absorbed by our goals, purposes and designs, to pay any attention to the way the world presents itself to us. The acts of consciousness throughout which the world and whatever it contains become accessible to us are lived, but they remain undisclosed, unthematized, and in this sense concealed.

This dissertation seeks to illuminate what people *do* see, notice, ponder and feel in their everyday journeys between two places.

## Research methods

To journey is to occupy a space *between* here and there. While not a direct expression of the betweenness of which I was searching, the journey offered a *literal* between that might act as a lens through which I could access *other* evocations of *betweenness*. To move between two places is to leave an icon – one’s home or place of work for example – and arrive back at an icon. To be neither here nor there is still to be somewhere, but the places of such spaces are more thought to be *between* rather than somewhere iconic. Was betweenness to be found in the everyday movement between two places? To journey is to make a transition from one place to another; it is to step off from a place and move through a limbo land to another place. It is this limbo land that I have set out to explore.

In order that my research function was qualitatively rigorous, it was necessary to ‘bound’ the field of my study – thus enabling my research to create meaning within the infinite potentialities of the *everyday*. Having narrowed the *everyday* down to the space of *journeying*, it was necessary to further delimit the parameters of the study by selecting a *particular* journey through which to explore betweenness. Having personally moved to Tasmania (to accept a scholarship to undertake this doctoral research), and chosen to live a long distance from the university (see Interlude: I travel by car), I made the journey, each working day, between my home and the university. After a few months of exploring possible routes, I chose a path, a route to become the *field* of my research<sup>7</sup>. This journey came to be defined as my most *common* journey, that I did *alone*, and where I was able to *think*. Having set the parameters, I expanded my research field to include other people, other journeys.

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<sup>7</sup> In this way, I was able to know when I was on/in my field or off/out of it. If I chose to turn off the designated route, I considered myself to be no longer within my field of study. Bounding the field in this way enabled me to ensure that a psychological awareness and focus was sustained while travelling within my research field. Focusing the field of study on a specific journey compelled me to focus on my research while journeying that particular journey, but it did not restrict me from exploring other journeys and themes while travelling in other places. Other journeys and places however, have not been included in this study.

Thus, the parameters of my own journey, of being on the most *common* journey, *alone*, where one is able to think (and articulate) became the criteria through which I was able to explore the journeys of others. First, however, let me explain my own journey and how I came to give it presence.

The selected route wound through numerous rural properties and farms, a State Forest, several small towns, along river foreshore, as well as through the edge of the city and the artery connecting the rural remote with the urban city. The journey took me through ten designated and named places, though many of those were simply named places with nothing more than a scatter of houses, a small beach or rocky bay, and maybe a few moored boats. The journey was 60 kilometres in length and took approximately one hour to travel by car.

Walking out my front door each morning on my way to work, or, on occasion, going for a walk along part of the journey, I was aware that I was now in research mode – I was, if you like, *in the field*. Everything that happened hereafter was deemed data and thus relevant to the research. Each journey was, by necessity, approached slightly differently, as each day both the journey and I were slightly different. My disposition was altered by all manner of idiosyncrasies and occurrences. These variations in mood occurred as a result of sleep or deprivation of same, diet (I developed gestational diabetes and had a baby while still researching), stress, variations in weather – all the factors, really, that impact on life generally. The journey itself changed as a result of seasonal rotations<sup>8</sup>, new development, maintenance of housing/infrastructure, vegetation and roads, natural hazards<sup>9</sup> and accidents<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> It was always interesting and joyous to observe the changing seasons across such a broad spectrum of the landscape, but at such a close scale – and with such familiarity. Sixty kilometres is a substantial distance to get to know at such depth.

<sup>9</sup> I was turned back at midnight one winter night after venturing deep into snowy terrain, due to snow blocking the road. The road was closed on two occasions due to flood. I have seen a bushfire some metres from the road, but the road was not closed.

Throughout the research process, each Monday to Friday, I would make my journey. During that time of movement between A and B I would sometimes heighten my senses to the experiences that I was encountering and, at other times, simply think. This process allowed me to relax into the research space, and let the journey itself and the places through which I travelled wash over me and, in turn, influence the project. Journeying alone for two hours each day provided the scope to make creative investigations into my practice as a human being. This was the only time in my day when I was alone. Thus, my journey opened me to the possibility of what might evolve. This involved simply being, but also extending myself and taking risks. It meant acting on things I might not otherwise do – I might *think* them, but not have the time or reason to *do* them<sup>11</sup>.

As time passed, several phenomena began to resonate and, after some months, I began to write of these experiences, resonances and influences; and to think about how those writings would be placed within the thesis. The result of this experimental writing is now present in the form of vignettes that I have named *interludes* and which are suspended in the space between chapters. The reason for this placement is threefold. Firstly, placing the interludes between chapters disrupts the linear spatiality of the thesis, an organisational principle within which the idea of betweenness alludes to, and, thus, aligns with the goal of allowing the thesis *to do what it says can be done*. Secondly, if the thesis chapters are akin to *drawings* – representations of something – then the interludes, as described in Chapter One, function along the lines of the ‘gutter’ found in graphic novels and comics (see

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<sup>10</sup> I was the first of three cars to arrive on the scene of three separate accidents. The first was at night, where a young pizza delivery driver hit a man walking on the side of the road. Many bones appeared broken; the man was conscious, but lying face down on the road and unable to move due to pain. Through his groans he got me to call his girlfriend and tell her what had happened. The second occasion was early in the morning when a young woman had rolled her car off an embankment. I put my coat around her shoulders because she was shivering.

<sup>11</sup> Getting out of the car at night to check an animal is one example of doing things that I might not ordinarily do.



Figures 7 and 8). The ‘gutter’ is the space between two static visual images where the mind makes conceptual leaps, many of which one may not even be aware of (see McCloud 1994). According to McCloud, “the gutter plays host to much of the *magic and mystery* that are at the very heart of comics!” (McCloud 1994, p. 66).



Figure 7. The space between sequential images (McCloud 1994, p. 66).



Figure 8. The gutter provides the space in which leaps of imagination are made (McCloud 1994, p. 66).

Thirdly, the interludes are like the daydreams you have while driving, where you think back and cannot remember what you have just passed through. The interludes and their placements are conscious representations – designed to present less conscious processes in a conscious form, and in so doing, to betweenness.

This research has emerged through an investigation of three key research sites. Firstly, I have conducted an investigation into the relevant literature. Secondly, I have conducted an auto-ethnographic investigation into my own ‘betweening’. Thirdly, I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews. A thorough discussion of the literature is provided in Chapter 3, and in Chapter 4. The autoethnographic and interview components of the thesis are introduced below. However, the purpose of these interrogations is not to establish a definitive understanding of betweenness, but to provide the fluid for an odyssey in mutual search of betweenness.

### Autoethnography

The interludes utilise an increasingly popular technique in qualitative academic research entitled autoethnography. In its simplest form, autoethnographic writing consists of “... first person accounts drawing on the experience of the author” (Atkinson *et al.* 2003, p. 65). The writing that evolved through my journeying between two places combined personal experience incurred in the journeying moment, and exploration of what the journey was able to inspire in me. Those inspirations drew on my past experiences, opinions, knowledge, skills and desires. Ellis and Bochner (2000, p. 739) capture these parameters in a nuanced description of autoethnography. It is:

... an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural. Back and forth autobiographers gaze, first through an ethnographic wide-angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then, they look inward, exposing a vulnerable self

that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretation.

Simultaneously, however, the journeys, through the interludes, sought to give presence to the betweenness of my perspective. According to Ellis *et al.* (2011, no page given) “[a]utoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyse (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)”. The process of journeying (and ‘giving presence to’ betweenness) was designed to allow betweenness to come forth with or without my awareness of it. The aim here is to create combinations of experiences that lead to new cultural and personal understandings. In line with the description of autoethnographic writing provided by Holman Jones (2008), the interludes sought to produce a space between the personal, the artful and the political; these words aim to ‘count’.

While the writing is autoethnographic as a broad category of qualitative research method, the journey writing is close to a sub-category of autoethnography entitled *personal narrative writing*. According to Ellis *et al.* (2011, no page given):

Personal narratives are stories about authors who view themselves as the phenomenon and write evocative narratives specifically focused on their academic, research, and personal lives ... Personal narratives propose to understand a self or some aspect of a life as it intersects with a cultural context, connect to other participants as co-researchers, and invite readers to enter the author’s world and to use what they learn there to reflect on, understand, and cope with their own lives.

In the case of this research, personal narrative has been used to foster the relationship between myself and the journey, as I write the journey into being, while also giving the journey presence through a solo voice. In doing so, it is hoped that betweenness, too, may be accentuated and fostered.

The choice of material that was written and then included in this thesis is not random – rather, the writings have been carefully selected. While I might say that on many journeys the spaces through which I travelled were able to “wash over me” (see page 66) this does not mean that my critical researcher’s mind was not attentive to the ramifications of what I was experiencing. The call to disrupt dominant discursive paradigms while simultaneously producing and imagining new ways of being in the world is an underlying influence in my own analysis and activity (see Ricoeur and Taylor 1986). As a result of this, my ontology predisposes me to analyse my work with a critical and directive intent – tensing towards disruption. I also, however, am earnest and ethical and strive for cultural groundedness, goodness and heart. These values are what guide my analysis, and, thus, the choice of what is included and how it is given presence.

The original 12 vignettes have been whittled to a final seven interludes (as they are now called). They are written in a way that honours the manner in which they were produced; they represent the creativity, the solitude, the mood and the stories through which they evolved. They were written either while driving – recorded onto a digital voice recorder – while parked on the side of the road, or after the journey was completed and from hindsight. Each interlude has been placed between chunks of text because the research is about betweenness; the interludes open the spaces between sections of text. “It has become an accepted feature of qualitative research, certainly over the last twenty-five years or so, to produce personal narratives of the qualitative research process – as fables of rapport or confessional tales. However, it is still relatively common practice to separate these personal accounts from the data and analysis proper” (Atkinson *et al.* 2003, p. 60). I have separated my narrative writing for the purposes of the argument and for clarity.

The interludes provide a window into what I think I might know; how I think I might be; and how I choose to give presence to those moments. The writing is almost always stream of consciousness and relies on honesty – while I choose what I say, I still reveal more than I otherwise might. The writing is also, however, a means to explore notions of the journey, creativity and everyday spaces. Driving alone, at

night, encountering animals on the road, imagining other people's interactions with what becomes one's own personal understanding and representations of a shared space and place are significant markers in an otherwise bland place, on an otherwise mundane journey. Analysis of these interludes has not been a process of cross-referencing against the cultural world in which I am embedded, but, rather, of blurring my eyes and my mind while I write and re-read. It is here that drawing comes to the fore – the drawing that I am asking you to take place in your mind. While I do cross-reference to the cultural world in which I am embedded, these points of analysis are not icons in the narrative landscape – they are bland, mundane moments, like the blur of a journey.

## Interviews

The third phase of my research into betweenness involved conversations with creative professional people. I chose to focus on artists (or creative professionals) and not professions that may, to varying degrees, involve creative processes in their work. Professionals not selected to be part of the study included, for example, scientists, medical professionals and farmers (landscape managers). Further, I chose to interview creative practitioners from the *classical* arts. These classical arts included poets, painters, writers, installation artists, architects, a dancer, composer, film maker, sculptor and a photo-media artist. Not that there is a strict delineation, but it is significant that creative practitioners who work in the fields of rock music (punk, metal, surf, rockabilly, adult alternative), circus, computer game design, cartoons, graphic design, or even such artisans as boat builders, ceramicists, jewellery designers, weavers, taxidermists, fashion designers, chefs, lighting designers, book binders, carpenters, basket makers, mandala makers, bakers, stone masons, brewers, viticulturist/viniculturists, cheese makers, and leather workers (for example), were not selected.

I made the decision to exclude a number of professions in order to focus upon creative professionals of a classical ilk, in accordance with a series of assumptions concerning creative professionals' focus on achieving something akin to betweenness

as part of their professional lives. I hoped that they would be able to communicate the incommunicability of betweenness in their journeys simply because they would have an innate or learned familiarity with the conceptual parameters of the idea<sup>12</sup>.

My own journey having proved so replete with insights, I approached creative professionals about their own spaces of solitude. I was interested in their ways of interacting with the particular places with which they were familiar and thus requested that they allow me to accompany them on a journey in which they are alone and are able to think. In line with my own journey, I asked that they choose a journey that they make on their own on a regular basis – their most regular journey, alone, between two places. The journey selected may be circuitous in that it starts and ends in the same location, or it may be from one place to another. The journey was able to follow any means of mobility practicable to us conversing and so might include bus, boat, walking, driving or flying.

Participants were sourced through their public profile as prominent creative practitioners<sup>13</sup>. As we have seen, it was expected that such people would, through their creative practice, innately understand betweenness and be able to illuminate my own understanding. Thus, all participants selected had a prominent public profile and professional practice; an openness to place and ways of representing place; a refined aesthetic sensibility and personal practices of journeying.

Encouraging participants to become involved in the project involved initial email contact. In these emails I introduced myself and the project and requested that they allow me to accompany them on their most regular journey that they make alone,

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<sup>12</sup> It may have been advantageous to interview art collectors, as they have the potential to appreciate those qualities that make an artwork meaningful, and perhaps there is an opportunity here for future research. Being able to recognise, appreciate and communicate those same values in everyday places may or may not be a capacity possessed by those who are practiced in the art of making betweenness themselves.

<sup>13</sup> A full list of participants may be found in Appendix F.

throughout which they are able to think, and that they would be comfortable sharing with me. It was suggested in this early email that it was my aim to say as little as possible, that they would narrate<sup>14</sup> to me their journey. If, however, that was not suitable, then I was happy to engage in conversation. The distance of the journey was not specified and may vary from one metre to hundreds of kilometres – the important criterion was that the participant was comfortable articulating that journey to me. The suggested time-frame for the journey was between one and three hours<sup>15</sup>. This would give us enough time to cover a reasonable amount of material, but not so much time that the material became too arduous for analysis.

Ethics Committee approval was obtained for the project. Participants were required to read an Information Sheet and to sign a Consent Form. Initially I carried out three pilot conversations. These were conducted with three colleagues within the Schools of Philosophy and Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Tasmania. Following the pilot studies, I travelled to Sydney to conduct five conversations while there<sup>16</sup>. While in Sydney, my father passed away and, thus, I cancelled all further conversations. On return to Hobart, I made the decision to focus the conversations on Tasmania and Tasmanians. As a result, the Sydney conversations were also deemed to be pilot studies.

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<sup>14</sup> I specifically use the term narrate because I was specifically interested in participant's past experiences of the places through which we journeyed. I want to know what they think about their journey and what they think about what they think. While ultimately I knew that participants would be speaking *ad lib*, I was interested in the responses I would get if participant's were to alternate between filtering their responses and speaking unselfconsciously and with spontaneity.

<sup>15</sup> A journey of one metre was still expected to take an hour or more! After all, a criterion of the journey was that it was one on which the participant spent contemplative time.

<sup>16</sup> The five Sydney conversations were with architect, Richard Leplastrier, composer, Peter Sculthorpe (who is, in any case, a Tasmanian!), film studies academic, Ross Gibson, social theorist, Stephen Muecke and poet, Alison Clarke.

Over the course of the pilot conversations, I was able to develop a loose interview schedule with several questions that I might ask if these topics did not present in discussion. In interview situation, all conversations involved at least some input from me, with some requiring significant input. As a result, the pattern that evolved in the interview process was that I would address lighter topics in the initial stages of the conversation, moving through to more in-depth engagement as the conversation progressed.

Participants were busy professionals and on several occasions unexpected engagements took priority over our conversation. Additionally, journeys required reasonably comfortable weather conditions to proceed and often conversations were postponed, particularly due to wind or rain. Conversations were recorded using digital voice recorders. Both the participant and I carried a recording device with an external microphone fitted to our lapels. The participant's recording was used for transcription purposes; though mine was available should my voice not be clear through their recorder. On a couple of occasions it was necessary to use my recording to determine the words of the participant as I was standing in a way that protected my recording device from the wind, thereby obtaining a clear and decipherable sound.

## Analysis

Analysis began while interviews were still being conducted, though each followed a similar pattern, occurring through a process of combing the data in a number of different ways. The techniques developed grew out of the analysis itself. First, conversations were transcribed and read several times. Following this, a 500 word summary of each conversation was written. At this stage, several themes began to emerge. The conversations were then coded to accommodate the emerging themes. Having done significant preliminary exploration into the data, I approached an NVivo expert and made enquiries as to how that program functioned. After a two hour introductory course, I made the decision to conduct the analysis manually.



Computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) packages are thought to increase the efficacy of analytic processes, but in terms of my own research I felt that a CAQDAS package would carry less scope for in-depth analysis and would thus be restrictive to my research aims. After my initial investigation I felt that NVivo closed down possibilities inherent in the data by the necessary coding of individual terms. Even though coding in NVivo permitted the software to do the work for you – performing the connections across and through various contexts – in doing so, it closed off other possibilities. Maintaining my visual control over the data allowed greater scope for creative relationships otherwise hidden by software packages. In hindsight, I can see the potential of using both CAQDAS and manual coding (see Welsh 2002), something that did not occur to me during analysis due to the project's inherent time restriction<sup>17</sup>. However, I also believe that coding the data manually provided greater depth of analysis and a more nuanced set of results.

The themes that emerged were loosely connected to the patterns of the conversations. First, there was the discussion of the journey itself; second, the nature of one's creative field; and third, betweenness. These three themes collectively generated 16 questions. All 16 may or may not have been asked (by me or participants), but through the process of simultaneous analysis I was able to determine when unasked questions had been answered. This was an important step in determining the relationships across the data. The next stage in the analysis was to bring each of the (16) questions back to a one word (or small number of words) answer per participant. In this way, I was able to sweep across the data in a couple of hundred words. I arranged these into a wheel-like diagram for ease of reference (see Figure 9).

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<sup>17</sup> Being a mother of three children and on a very low-income imposed further time restraints.

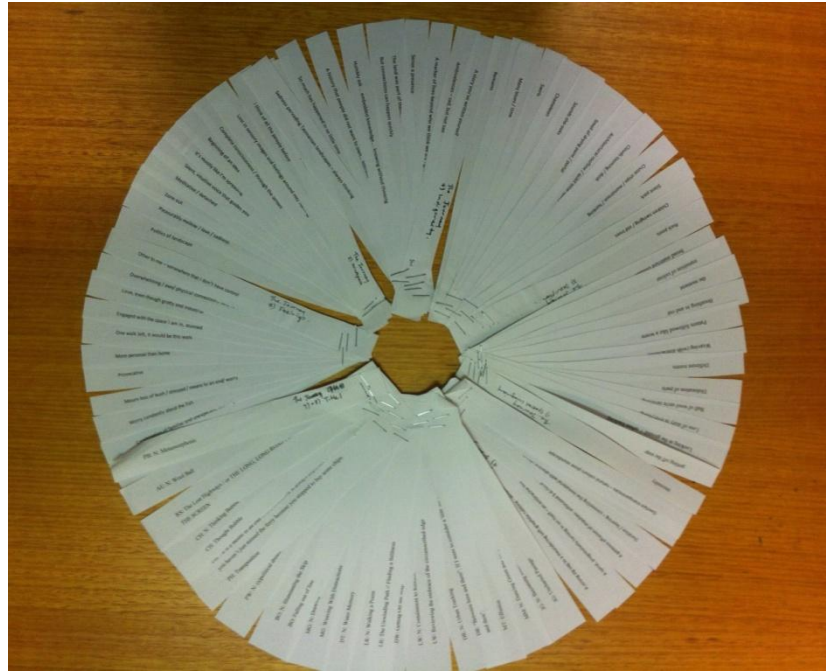


Figure 9. Wheel of data

Following this analysis, I determined that I needed to direct four additional questions to participants – questions that were more suited to a written rather than a verbal response. These questions were emailed out to participants and returned to me via the same medium.

The journeys/interviews conducted occurred in a variety of locations around Tasmania. Modes of transport included walking, driving, bus and boat. Distances varied from 10m to 60km and time varied between 1 hour and three hours, though one conversation lasted for five hours. One participant preferred to have several questions written down for him to think about and to return the responses to me in a hand-written letter. In the Information Sheet I requested that participants allow me to accompany them on a repeat journey, where I would not speak to them, but rather film them from behind – as they journeyed. While most participants agreed to this aspect of the research, I made the decision to defer this element of the data collection until a later date. It became apparent that this was too onerous as a task and would not contribute substantially to the overall data and so was abandoned, though pilot

films presented some interesting data that may be followed up at a later date as part of my visual arts practice.

Participants were requested to submit an artwork within their particular artistic medium that reflected on the journey and the ideas contained therein. Only one participant ended up doing this, and a piece of poetry was published as a result (see page 205-10). It was my intention to stage an exhibition of multi-media artworks, all responding to the idea and interpretation of betweenness. I held numerous meetings with curator, Paula Silva, to discuss possibilities for this event. I attended grant workshops and made enquiries to galleries. I intended to exhibit works of my own in this exhibition and spent some time preparing my own work<sup>18</sup>. However, time again constrained the project and I have been forced to defer this element of the research until after thesis submission. Photographs of the journey were exhibited at the CAST (Contemporary Art Spaces Tasmania) Members Show in 2010 (see Figure 10).

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<sup>18</sup> My own work included filming and photographing my journey. The films were to be played onto the forward and rear windscreens of an old car. Viewers would sit in the plush interior car to watch the mundane journey pass them by. The forward facing journey was to be played on the front windscreen and the rear facing journey to be played on the back window (see page 42 for further details).





Figure 10. Photographs exhibited as part of ‘CAT Member’s Show’ (formerly CAST).

The final analysis of the data occurred once the other parts of the thesis were in draft form. Over a period of several weeks, the data chapter seemed to write itself. Everything started to appear quite clear – obvious even – to the point where I simply followed where the data led. As a process, the whole thing felt quite extraordinary, particularly given the sheer number of hours I had invested in the early and middle layer stages of analysis. In the early and middle stages of analysis, I certainly found themes and patterns, but nothing that truly resonated with the ideas surrounding betweenness.

## Interlude: Drawing the line

*Coming to Tasmania with the idea of doing this research project was a decision of the heart. The ideas that have formed the underlying structure of this thesis were not going to easily rest – so when the opportunity became a reality, I made the move from what had been an almost nomadic existence in New South Wales to the relative stillness of what has become one place, one house, in rural Tasmania.*

*It had been my intention to live as close to the University as possible, preferably within walking distance. It had been my intention to minimise as much daily ‘travel’ as possible, but when that perfect dwelling did not present itself in the urban environment I was lured to the rural south by friends from Sydney who had friends in Tasmania, who had friends who had a vacant house. The house turned out to be a 1940s farmhouse on one hundred acres of pasture sprinkled with sheep, two horses, a small apple orchard, a vegetable garden and a couple of big old timber sheds. The place appealed to the more ‘Western’ romantic notions that I somehow carry with me. But, it wasn’t until six Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos landed in a tree only metres from me that I knew that I wanted to live in this rural setting. The situation seemed to outweigh the 120 kilometre drive that I would need to undertake each day to get to my place of work, this University.*

*A couple of days later we moved in, and the day after that I made my first journey into the city of Hobart. At this stage we only had one car, a 1969 HK Holden. This car, with its column shift manual gear changes, the floor-activated high beam headlights and other practical idiosyncrasies – made the journey a particular one. Rather than being a time of the thoughtless, mindless, remote control, automated, ‘just-get-me-there’ mentality, it became a time of intense thought: thoughts that were moulded by every curve and undulation, surface of the road, and layer of light. Even in dry weather, each day’s travel required my utmost concentration. This heightened sensitivity generated an intensity of thinking and awareness. It is quite a spirited*

*adventure to embark on such a commute in such a vehicle. In retrospect it seems that it was for this reason that the journey began to resonate.*

*In making this journey I imagine that I am drawing a line. By driving my vehicle forward I push a space out of the way, clear a path in the air and leave a trail to be filled in my wake. If you could put a colour to that cleared space and map its vacuum before it was refilled, that is how I imagine my journey: as a linear inscription; a record of my presence; the drawing of a line. However, when one comes to 'actually' give presence to this movement through space, this drawing of a line, the linearity of the line begins to unravel. The molecules or fibres that make up the line; the point at which it is a line and the point at which it is no longer; the connections to the line and the influences on it blend and blur like a spectrum of colour. When one begins to isolate the line as a line, the complex relations of the line become evident. It is within this complex net of relations, textures and patterns that the following experimental writing has been given presence.*

*Together, though not exclusively to each other or to other possibilities, they help to map a moment: the moment that is now, in the life that is mine, in the places through which I travel, in the space and place of betweenness. The line, the journey, the interviews, the analysis and the writing are part of a longer, slower, broader, deeper drawing, a particular drawing from a momentary vantage point – a drawing of the betweenness of place.*



## Chapter 3: Review of the literature

In this chapter I bring together a series of theoretical discussions, each contained as a single unit, but each adding to a frame of reference for betweenness. Think of these discrete theoretical discussions as a component of the drawing of the betweenness of place.

### **Place**

Place as a concept has been part of the quest for knowledge since the earliest fixed settlements of human beings. To know about place means to know *where* you are, *how* you are and *why* you are as a species, a culture and an individual. With specific, though ever-changing sets of cultural values and practices – determined (in part) through relationships with the places themselves (human beings have endured in and through relationships with place) – it is the heart of existence. Knowledge(s) about place and places has thus mirrored and shaped the growth, change and development of human beings in ways that continue to the present day.

The discursive journey (embedded within and reflective of the evolution of culture – for thinking and writing about place has certainly evolved) has waxed and waned in terms of its relative priority, even sliding, at times, into relative insignificance. In the present academic era, say the last 20-30 years, place has clarified as one of the most important features of both the geographic discourse and the broader academic setting (often through interdisciplinary pursuits), as well as how we understand *being* from the ground up – in communities, in places themselves.

Place is a diverse and elusive topic that sits as a cornerstone in the study of geography as a discipline (Cresswell 2004). The study of place has a long history. The earliest form of geographical enquiry was the description of places (Barnes and Gregory 1997, p. 292), as with the great geographer of antiquity, Strabo, who sought

to systematise the knowledge generated about the world in his multiple volume *Geographica* (20 BC – 8 AD) (Barnes and Gregory 1997). In the quest to assemble knowledge about places, the scientific search for facts dominated the discipline of geography for several centuries. This positivist, space-focused perspective sought to establish universal and abstract facts relevant to categories of place through external observation of landscape features.

It was not until the 1970s that the search for understandings of place shifted from externalist perspectives to the “inside view of personal experience” (Barnes and Gregory 1997, p. 293). This mode of humanist geography was initiated and characterised by the work of Yi-Fu Tuan, Anne Buttimer, Edward Relph and David Seamon. These thinkers, dissatisfied with scientific representation and analysis and concerned about the *writing out* of personal experience came to focus on a more inside, personal, subjective view of place. The key concepts of this era included place, sense of place and placelessness (see for example Relph 1976; Tuan 1976 ; 1977; Pocock 1981; Seamon and Mugerauer 1985; Adams *et al.* 2001).

Contemporary understandings of place have sought to reconcile the objective, chorological areal differentiation; the Marxist concern for social relations and structural factors; and the humanists’ appeal for subjectivity, place meaning and place experience (Entriken 1991; Merrifield 1993). A closer analysis of contemporary ideas employed in the discourse on place – as they relate to the humanist understanding – may help to ground the empirical elements of this study. To begin with, place and space are not to be confused.

Like place, the discourse on space has a long history. Curry (1995) observes that there have been a number of ways in which the concept of space has been explicated. An early understanding, advanced by Aristotle, described space as “static, hierarchical and concrete”. Newton conceptualised space as an “absolute grid, within which objects are located and events occur” (Curry 1995, p. 5). According to Shields (1997), up until the 1970s this idea of space as *absolute*, a grid in and on which events occurred continued to prevail. Barnes and Gregory (1997, p. 514) notes that

space has been considered as “the passive stage on which the drama of history unfolds ...[and] the plate on which the positivities of human action and meaning are inscribed”. This way of thinking has had profound implications for the ways in which human interaction has been perceived.

Lefebvre (1991), in his seminal text, *The Production of Space*, differentiates ideas of space, emphasizing social space as distinguished from more absolute conceptions . The idea of “social space” comes close to contemporary understandings of place in that spaces are imbued with meaning and significance. It is common in the place discourse to observe that spaces become places when individual people attribute meaning to those spaces. For example, the Marxist geographer, David Harvey (1996, p. 310), writes “places acquire much of their permanence as well as much of their distinctive character from the collective activities of people who dwell there, who shape the land through their activities, and who build institutions and social relationships within a bounded domain”. Ways of imagining place continue to evolve.

Places are “material things” (Cresswell 2004, p. 7) – “portions of space” where we are able to recognise the qualities of earthliness and worldliness and, through processes of recognition and focus, to imbue them with meaning. The qualities of earthliness and worldliness cover the full spectrum of earthly and worldly *things*, from oceans, deserts, rivers, cities, harbours, roads, mountains and vegetation to buildings, parks, books, mirrors, knives and mobile telephones. Even imagined places have “an imaginary materiality” (Cresswell 2004, p. 7).

The three fundamental aspects of place outlined by political geographer, John Agnew (1987), are *location*, *locale* and *sense of place*. The concept *location*, Agnew suggests, refers to being knowingly located in a place. When one can determine *where* one is; that is, generate an awareness of one’s immediate surroundings, one is located in place.

Human beings have developed numerous techniques for determining relative location – from maps and charts to global positioning systems. To be located, however, has its genesis in the position and arc of the sun across the sky, the patterns of the stars, variations in climate and hydrology and the shape of geographical landforms. Driven by need, water sources and hunting grounds, these systems of knowing one's place have become quite intricate. Recognition involves many techniques that include experiencing, naming and story-telling. Places are often located in reference to other places.

Location is not a singular phenomenon, however. Any location may nest within other locations; the layered ways of understanding one's location fits one inside the other. To be nested in place, is to be, say, outside the corner shop, on Sandy Bay Road, in Sandy Bay, in Hobart, in Tasmania, in Australia and on Earth. When I am in my car I am in two places: I am in my car as a capsule of intimate proximity, and when the car is travelling, I remain in the capsule as we negotiate what may be many places, depending on the particular journey undertaken. In this way, places may proffer a variety of different meanings and understandings.

By *locale*, Agnew means the material setting for social relations – in Cresswell's words, it is “the actual shape of place within which people conduct their lives as individuals” (Cresswell 2004, p. 7). This may be the walls of a room, or the direction through which one may travel, as in roads or building entranceways. Often architects work within this realm when designing how a body or number of bodies will negotiate a built space. Greg Lynn (1999) uses digital representation to visually convey the movement of people through architectural spaces. This taps into Agnew's *locale* by reducing the way architecture is imagined to a series of networks and flows. As “the material setting for social relations” (Cresswell 2004, p. 7), *locale* also refers to the ways in which people conduct their lives in spaces – and, thus, also refers to sexuality, gender, religion or age.

By *sense of place* Agnew is referring to the connections and attachments that people develop through their relationships with specific places over time. Depending on the

individual concerned, creating a ‘sense of place’ may be as slight as rearranging some furniture in a sparse office to embellishing one’s home with the tokens of one’s life. It might also be the ‘sense of a place’ identified by memories or stories that might include joy, tragedy and/or fear<sup>19</sup>. A discursive ‘sense of place’, however, is often associated with the geographical locations where one feels strong, significant and even overwhelming emotion. Places such as Port Arthur in Tasmania have the capacity to elicit profound emotion sadness and fear. Initially an Aboriginal place, then the site of a colonial prison, in 1996 Port Arthur was the site of a horrific massacre when thirty five people were killed by a young man armed with a variety of different firearms. Other cultural icons of place may induce a sense of awe. The Sydney Opera House or Uluru in the Northern Territory may inspire one to consider the grandeur of the earth and its peoples.

Place is closely related to space. Indeed, philosopher Jeff Malpas suggests that place and space have been used so interchangeably that “neither can be inquired into independently of the other” (2012, p. 7). Further, Malpas suggests that the phenomenon of *space* has not been clearly articulated (largely ignored even) in the geographical discourse – suggesting that geographers tend to rely on an implicit understanding of space as it applies to social and political processes – rather than an interrogation of what it might actually be. This may have something to do with space being a concept that is slippery to intellectually grasp (Malpas 2012), but it also has to do with how space has been represented, imagined and/or ignored. Malpas (2012, p. 7) calls for a “radical rethinking” of the ways in which space is imagined, described and practiced in contemporary academic geography. The dominant spatial paradigm within geographical discourse is that of Doreen Massey, and it is to her perspectives that we now turn.

Within the geographic discourse, certain patterns in the deployment of the concept of space have arisen and shifted over time. That there is an ‘agenda’ running through this discourse that is in part a response to earlier geographic research is not hidden

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<sup>19</sup> For a discussion on fear, see Tuan (1979).

and, in fact, informs contemporary discourse, as is evident in this excerpt from the *Dictionary of Human Geography* (Johnston *et al.* 2000, p. 767)<sup>20</sup>:

The production of geographical knowledge has always involved claims to know 'space' in particular ways. Historically, special importance has been attached to the power to fix locations of events, places and phenomena on the surface of the earth and to represent these on maps. The extension of these capacities involved a series of instrumental, mathematical and graphical advances, but these innovations were also political technologies that were implicated in the production of particular constellations of power. As such they carried within them highly particular conceptions of space that were always more than purely technical constructions. This recognition of an intricate connection between power, knowledge and geography has transformed the ways in which the contemporary discipline of human geography has conceptualized space.

Such conceptions of space have predominated in the work of human geographers as understandings of space have been developed, refined and reiterated. Central to these understandings is British geographer, Doreen Massey. Her writing has influenced generations of geographers. Her commitment to minority, dispossessed and marginalised groups has been egalitarian and unwavering. Those aspirations, central to Massey's work, are not in question. Rather, it is the specific, detailed and clear ontological underpinnings of her understanding of space and, thus, place, that are in question, as we shall see.

Essential to Massey's work is the *breaking down of conceptual boundaries*. She disputes two sets of boundaries. The first are the boundaries between dualisms; the

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<sup>20</sup> The 2000 edition of the dictionary does not contain an entry for space on its own; rather, the entry is entitled: "space, human geography and". The 2009 version of *The Dictionary of Human Geography* does contain the entry 'Space'.

second are the boundaries around specific places. I will deal with these, briefly, in turn. First, Massey argues that time-space compression<sup>21</sup> and people's relatively new found freedoms of global mobility are unequal in terms of opportunity. Arguing that "things are speeding up, and spreading out" (Massey 1997, p. 315), which is characterised as a form of "time-space compression", Massey reflects that people, objects, information and capital are more mobile than ever.

In her view, however, systems of flow (of people, capital and ideas) are not equally distributed: flows and networks are party to and even reinforce a "*power- geometry*" (Massey 1993, p. 59; 1997, p. 317). According to Massey (1997, p. 318), "*mobility and control over mobility, both reflects and reinforces power*". Massey calls for a politics of mobility and access, to even out the disparities between those who can move freely around the globe, utilising digital communications, and those trapped in those same (unequal) power relations – unable to afford the luxury of safe travel or easy, affordable access to information and communication.

Massey draws on the role of dualisms in the construction of power-geometries; that is, those on the lesser side of the binary (the imagined [as opposed to the real] black or woman, for example) are perpetually disenfranchised by their incumbent situation. Massey's argument is aimed at exposing the power (and lack thereof) that is intrinsic to the manner in which places and spaces are imagined. In the process of understanding things through binaries – bounded, discrete, non-porous entities – we lock in and reinforce the geometries of power. The conceptual way out of this bounded situation is through deployment of the concept 'relational'. The relational is intimately implicated in the notion of identity: "... *our identities are constituted in and through those engagements, those practices of interaction. Identities are forged in and through relations (which include non-relations, absences and hiatuses). In*

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<sup>21</sup> "Time-space compression", coined by Harvey (1989, p. 147), refers to the accelerating pace of activity in everyday life, brought about, in part by technological developments in transport. The way people perceive of that change is as a compression of space and time.

consequence they are not rooted or static, but mutable ongoing productions” (Massey 2004, p. 5).

The second set of boundaries that Massey disputes are those *drawn around places*. Drawing lines on maps seeks to order our understanding of places and thus facilitate their management. As places change and develop, those lines form a substantial part of the mechanism to determine how that place is imagined and, thus, reinforce the way that place is:

A particular problem with the conception of place is that it seems to require the drawing of boundaries. Geographers have long been exercised by the problem of defining regions, and this question of ‘definition’ has almost been reduced to the issue of drawing lines around a place...But that kind of boundary around an area precisely distinguishes between an inside and an outside. It can so easily be yet another way of constructing a counterposition between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Massey 1997, p. 319).

For Massey, drawing boundaries between places is part of a ‘disempowering’ mechanism that is reinforced through its dominance in the geographic imaginary<sup>22</sup> – how we imagine the concepts that differentiate and merge. In her book, *For Space* (2005, p. 1), Massey calls for geographers to “think about space differently” – to develop a spatiality of place that meets the political and social agendas of the less privileged and those discriminated against and marginalised by the drawing of boundaries. Spaces, she argues, should be recognised as the:

... product of interrelations; as constituted through interactions (from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny)... [as] the sphere of possibility of the existence of multiplicity in the sense of

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<sup>22</sup> The *geographical imaginary* is described by Cresswell, (2006, p. 25) thus, “ideas about such things as place, spatial order, and mobility ... provides an underlying metaphysics that influences and informs thought and action”.



contemporaneous plurality... multiplicity and space are co-constitutive ... [and as] always under construction ... Perhaps we could imagine space as a simultaneity of stories-so-far (Massey 2005, p. 9).

Places (rather than spaces), she argues, are processes that should be seen as constituted by flows, networks and practices and their interconnection. For geography and geographers, the nature of place “is also about power in relation to the flows and the movement” (Massey 1997, p. 317). Massey (1997, p. 323) calls for a progressive sense of place – a “global sense of place”. In doing so, she (2005, p. 9) calls for an end to the boundaries as a means to understanding places:

Instead then, of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around, they can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a larger proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself, whether that be a street, or a region or even a continent.

While my engagement with Massey’s work has been brief, it is enough to provide a context for the position I wish to identify next. Given the scope of thesis, it is imperative to develop support for my conceptualisation of betweenness – which is closely linked to the following section about space and place.

Critical to my engagement with the discourse on place and, thus, space is the thinking of philosopher, Jeff Malpas (1998, 1999, 2006, 2007, 2012), who specialises in studies of place, primarily through the work of Martin Heidegger. Indeed, Edward Casey (see for example 1993, 1997, 2001a, 2002, 2004, 2005; 2011) has said that Malpas’ *Place and Experience* (1999), “is clearly the most important recent book on the question of place—likely, the most important book ever on this elusive subject” (Casey 2001b, p. 225).

Having engaged with Malpas’ (1999) *Place and Experience* and Casey’s (2002) *Representing Place*, my understanding of space and place combines this reading with

the deep knowing, deep thinking, tacit and tactile practices of *placed experience* itself. I drift in and out of texts and places and, thus, my knowing reflects my shifting vantage point (placedness) on the shifting epistemological ground (place) – interpreted as stories, felt as feelings, expressed as smiles or tears, experienced as art works, listened to as music and absorbed and practiced as modes of dwelling.

In a recent paper addressed specifically to the geographical discourse, Malpas (2012, p. 5) calls for “a more careful analysis of the ontological underpinnings of the concepts at issue” (space and place). It is these “ontological underpinnings” that I seek to elucidate as part of the theoretical framework for this discussion on space, place and, thus, betweenness.

As we have seen, Malpas (2012, p. 7) calls for a “radical rethinking of some of the basic presuppositions that underpin current geographical thinking”; most notably in the way that space is conceptualised in human geography and across the social sciences more broadly. Geography (and the social sciences) has misinterpreted the nature of space, Malpas (2012, p. 5) argues, such that “careful analysis of the ontological underpinnings” of space and thus place (and thus time) is required.

As noted above, space and place tend to be used interchangeably – such that their distinction has been blurred. Nevertheless, Malpas (2012, p. 8) suggests that this distinction is not primarily the issue; rather, that there are actually several interrelated concepts (space and place included) that “weave in and out of one another as different senses become more important at one time than at another, and as the relations shift”. The three core concepts, in addition and integral to space, place (and time), Malpas (2012, p. 8) defines as “boundedness, openness and emergence”. These concepts interweave.

The discursive field of geography has founded its dominant spatial paradigm on the notion of space being unbounded (Massey 2005; Thrift 2006) and relational. The shift in the geographical discourse toward a relational understanding of space and place has been so pronounced that Malpas (2012) refers to the movement as

“geographical relationism”. The move towards relational ways of thinking seems to foster the breaking down of (conceptual) boundaries as if they might be *physical barriers* to the freedom implied by *space*. The idea that boundaries are imperative to an understanding of space and/or place is, thus, contentious.

Drawing on Malpas (2012, p. 7), an ontology of space is sought in order to explore the “conceptual constellation within which [space] operates”. This stellar journey traces back to three ideas. The first of these is the womb, the Greek *chora* – which basically translates as “space... which is contained” – and out of which things come into being (hopefully babies). Thus, it is both closed and somewhat open (or open-able when required). The second is the Greek *topos*, which, derived from Aristotle’s *Physics*, suggests “space as container” (Einstein, quite a creative soul, called it a box). These two concepts correlate roughly with space and/or place and both contain a notion of openness or extendedness – though also a (simultaneous) *closing around* and a *making room for*.

The current geographical conception of space, however, is more closely related to the Greek term *kenon* – which roughly translates as extendedness or void, and it is here that Malpas and Massey part company. Malpas (2012) argues that taking the boundary from the conceptualisation of place (as in a relational understanding of place – think swirls, flows, networks and nodes) renders place *spatial* or part of the void and infinite extendedness. However, because place is a ‘bounded-openness’ (think womb and box) it is a mistake to see place as unbounded pure extension. In moving from space as absolute, to place as relational, geography has thrown the baby out with the bathwater.

The third concept (see above), one which is paramount to this discussion, is that of *emergence*. The idea of emergence is held in the term itself – to emerge, to stand or come forth – that may be thought of as a “form of movement towards, into, or out of” (Malpas 2012, p. 10)<sup>23</sup>. Emergence may be thought of as perduring, duration, a form

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<sup>23</sup> The notion of womb returns here.

of extendedness. Each of these three concepts, *boundedness*, *openness* and *emergence*, cannot be considered independently of the other two. They have, in their shared conceptualisation, an essential movement – they are not static – both within and between place(s). This relationship is clearly stated by Malpas (2012, p. 11):

For there to be bounds is for there to be that which is bounded – an open domain in which things can ‘take place’; for there to be emergence is for there to be an openness into which emergence takes place; for there to be openness is for there to be that which may emerge into what is open.

If place may be thought to hold boundedness, openness and emergence together, then it is also that place holds space and time together – thus they are woven through and integral to the other (Malpas 2012).

In 1991, Nicholas Entriken (1991) published *The Betweenness of Place*, in which he argued that any understanding of place must take elements of both subjective and objective points of view and inhabit the space somewhere in-between.

To understand place requires that we have access to both an objective and subjective reality. From the decentred vantage point of the theoretical scientist, place becomes either location or a set of generic relations and thereby loses much of its significance for human action. From the centred viewpoint of the subject, place has meaning only in relation to an individual or a group's goals and concerns. Place is best viewed from points in between (Entriken 1991, p. 5).

Place investigated and understood from this perspective (between subjective and objective) has provided the base line for geography in the two ensuing decades (Johnston *et al.* 2000). Indeed, this idea of *between the boundaries* may have helped to further the idea of removing the boundaries.

For Feminist geographers, getting between the boundaries was a conceptual mechanism to deal with the problematic brought about by males and females being

different – and one having more power than the other. This extended to include females being themselves differentiated (rich and poor, black and white). Nevertheless, references to betweenness within the literature are few and targeted at a specific purpose. Take, for example, the focus on the asymmetrical nature of the relationship between researcher and researched (see McDowell 1993; Katz 1994; Tooke 2000). Rose (1997) argues that betweenness as a concept is able to resolve the binary tension between researcher and researched in that one is always both separate from *and* related to one another.

For me this is where place gets interesting. Unlike Entriken (1991) and Rose (1997), I do not seek to engage with place from somewhere in-between; it is my intention to explore *betweenness per se*; that is: betweenness as it may be encountered outside of the subjective/objective binary. While betweenness does indeed operate between binaries, subjective and objective included, it is also more than that. The space *between* abandons binaries and calls on, not a third space (Lefebvre 1991; Merrifield 1993), but the combined and blended space of representation, being, dwelling, creativity and mobility. The space of *between* to which I refer draws on the terms *emergence*, *openness* and *boundedness* as put forward by Malpas (2012). In this regard, perhaps betweenness is more aligned with the term *among*; in true betweenness style, it takes on an envelope of multitudinous possibility.

It is at this point that I apply all of these backgrounds to my own understanding of place and space – as my thinking has been influenced by the work of Malpas, Casey, Massey, Cresswell, Rose, Tuan, Seamon, Buttimer and geographic discourse on a variety of topics from post-colonialism through feminism and poststructuralism. That thinking has led me to the position that boundedness is not a concept to be discarded, for boundedness makes possible the appearance of places. When I am aware of a limit, an edge, it provides a space of not knowing. Within this space of the unknown emergence occurs. Such emergence is the unfolding of events that can be marked as the space of possibility. Without the concept of boundary, the possibility of possibility dissolves. The boundary designates the space of the *known*, and outside the boundary is the *unknown*. It is the *unknown* and its contemplation and arousal

that may be facilitated by dwelling, which is accentuated by creativity and is performed through being in the world.

But what of those places that do not inspire a strong emotional connection, places that are mundane or bland, places one might forego if given the choice? These places might be substance of journeys – places that are not locations (at least not fixed), not locales (though they may be), and certainly not ‘senses of place’.

The role of place in this thesis is to provide a theoretical underpinning – a ground if you like – to the idea of betweenness. The threefold *boundedness*, *openness* and *emergence* are the scaffold of place, but also the criteria of betweenness.

Boundedness, openness and emergence are the dimensions through which betweenness arises and thus the possible becomes possible. Creative practice is closely linked to place in that it is the ground through which creativity emerges.

## Representation

### Introduction

Representation is the most prominent mechanism through which human beings communicate, enquire and make sense of the world. The survival imperative drove the human species to generate and refine an array of mechanisms of communication. In its earliest phases, the use of gestures – hand, arm and facial movements and expressions exchanged between people – provided the earliest building blocks for the development of language (Gordon *et al.* 1973). Representation came into existence with language. In its most pared-back form, representation is simply one thing *standing in for* another – a word is substituted for a thing. The word *dog* acts as a signifier for an *actual* dog, and aids in communication, particularly when there is no dog actually present. Without such linguistic signifiers, communication would involve one long, complicated game of charades. It is through this simple mechanism of one thing *standing in for* another that language came into being.

The term ‘representation’ is used in a number of disciplinary contexts, from media and communication, art and visual culture, film and literary studies, sociology and linguistics and politics and government and, thus, has many “nuances and uses” (Webb 2009, p. 1). By definition, representation is thought to be “[a] set of practices by which meanings are constituted and communicated” (Dubow 2000, p. 703) ; it is the “process of rendering something (an object, event, idea or perception) intelligible and identifiable” (Dubow 2009). Dubow here exemplifies the *standing in for* or *substitution* that I have referred to above.

The discourse on representation is extensive, and I aim to navigate a path through it that provides background for the reader while steering towards the research outcomes and subsequent conclusions.

If we look at how representation *comes about* we find that “however accidental the circumstances of discovery or invention, new ways of perceiving and acting take root only in moments of conceptual insight” (Sheets-Johnstone 2010, p. 6). Sheets-Johnstone (2010, p. 6) asks, “[w]here did these concepts come from – from the concept of *edges?*, of *flaking?*, of a *spoken language?*, of *numbers?*, of a *punctuated existence?*, of *drawing?*” What shows is that:

...in each instance, insight was generated in tactile-kinesthetic [sic] experience, which is to say by the tactile-kinesthetic [sic] body – the body that through touch and movement distinguishes not only a rubble of stones from no rubble at all as it walks the earth, or the making of sound from no making of sound as it conceals itself from danger, but the body that distinguishes a sharp-edged stone from a blunt one, a quadrupedal stride from a bipedal one, a touching of lips in making the sound *m* from a touching of lips in making the sound *p*, and so on. That sensorily felt and sensorily feeling body was the cognitive source of those fundamental and preeminently [sic] human concepts that shaped human thinking and human evolution. That body was the standard upon which each new practice or system of beliefs was forged (Sheets-Johnstone 2010, p. 6).

Representation made possible the development of shared understandings in many and varied forms (originating in primal speech, singing and drawing for example). These have evolved alongside the development of human community and have come to constitute what we now recognise and know as *culture*. Operating within a cultural system allows people to (co)exist with each other in shared places, with recognizable and cooperative systems of language and symbols that lead to mechanisms of value, currency, exchange, and trust. While for the human species communication, evolution and survival go hand in hand, the ability to work together through processes and practices of shared understanding is the fundamental component of cultural evolution (and sometimes revolution).

Given the basic function of representation, this chapter asks the question, do the ways in which humans understand the concept of representation inform, in turn, how humans conceptualise and modify their ways of seeing the world and, thus, their chosen processes of cultural change? If so, how might representation be understood so that new ways of seeing the world might be configured?

As a tool, representation (or the process of *standing in for* something else) is paramount to communication and human survival. Representation is part of the “nature of being”; it is tangled up with what something “actually is”, of the status with which things, properties, objects or experiences are constituted (Webb 2009, p. 6). For example, as seen in Figure 11, the words table, tableau, tisch, tablo, taulukko, tafel, tālikā or mesa are not the same as the image of the table<sup>24</sup>. That is, the word ‘table’ (in various languages) stands in for the actual table so that people may understand what is being communicated. Thus, the word is never the thing itself.

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<sup>24</sup>The image of the table shown here also acts as a substitution for the actual table (and the word) as, in the context of this thesis, submitting an actual table would be impracticable.



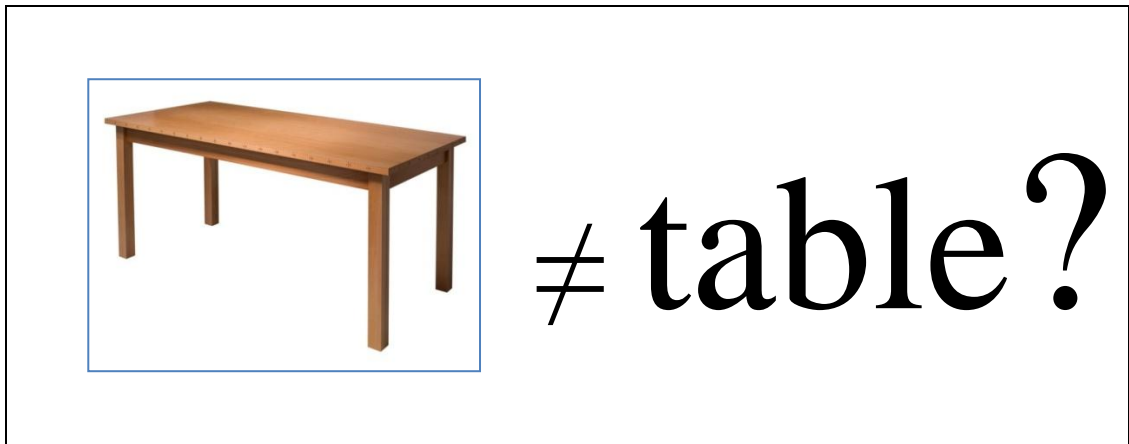


Figure 11. Word and thing

However, representation has a perpetual feedback loop; in facilitating communication and understanding, representation simultaneously works epistemologically to shape and produce “what we know, and how we know it” (Webb 2009, p. 6). As a practice, the media generated through representation (words, text, images, things) constitute the realities to which they refer (Johnston *et al.* 2000). In suggesting that meaning and, thus, to some degree, reality itself evolve through a process of construction, it becomes apparent that they (meaning and reality) “do not simply or innocently exist” (Webb 2009, p. 36)<sup>25</sup>.

One’s knowledge of the world is developed through the accumulation of experiences and perceptions. The perceived world, too, is not innocent, nor is it random. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006, p. 158), “[r]eality is in the eye of the beholder; or rather, what is regarded as real depends on how reality is defined by a particular social group... [i]n other words, reality may be in the eye of the beholder, but the eye has had cultural training, and is located in a social setting and a history”.

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<sup>25</sup> If it is accepted that representation is an active, constitutive practice, then it follows that “knowledge cannot be neutral or innocent of power relations” (Johnston *et al.* 2000, p. 703). While power is embedded in representation, power, however, is not central to my argument here. Rather than power, I am interested here in the ways in which representation shapes perception.

It may not be readily apparent that one is seeing the world through culturally *tuned* senses<sup>26</sup>:

... when it comes to sensory experience, there is no gap between what is represented, and the form – or vehicle – through which it is represented. We cannot examine the individual elements of how an experience presents itself to us; it just *is*. It does not seem to the person experiencing it that it is a representation; that someone else, or you yourself in a different context, might experience it differently (Webb 2009, p. 84).

One's world view is a taken-for-granted assumption about the way the world is. It is impossible, however, for two people to see the world through the same eyes – or feel it through the same feet or skin. Representation is fundamental to everyday life; it is the conceptual mechanism through which people and places shape each other – though also themselves: “Each of us is produced through a complex mix of background tastes, concerns, training, tendencies, experiences – all made real to us through the principles and processes of representation that frame and govern our experiences of being in the world” (Webb 2009, p. 2).

While places are not understood in the same ways by all people, they are nonetheless shaped by human interaction. The mediation of individual perceptions into accepted social perception generates a shared understanding within which humans communicate. Humans, individually and collectively as social groups, act to shape place as an intrinsic part of being in the world (Malpas 1999). In light of this discussion on representation, we can assert that place thus comes to be represented through human experience. A place, according to Ingold (2000, p. 192):

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<sup>26</sup> This is taken further by Michael Dummett who suggests that there is no such thing as ‘common sense’: “The idea of the commonsense view of the world is as much a myth as that of the noble savage (or indeed, that of the savage)” (Dummett 1979, p. 29). Suchet (2002) also makes this argument in regard to the dominance of the Eurocentric world view in relation to Napranum Aboriginal people. There is indeed common sense, but it is different for every person or in this case, group of people.

... owes its character to the experiences it affords to those who spend time there – to the sights, the sounds and indeed the smells that constitute its specific ambience. And these, in turn, depend on the kinds of activities in which its inhabitants engage. It is from this relational context of people’s engagement with the world, in the business of dwelling, that each place draws its unique significance.

Together place and culture are co-constituted; each weaving through the other such that the everyday practices of living beings *shape* place in the same way that places *shape* everyday living. This co-constitutive shaping occurs within seemingly fixed places or on the journeys and paths between such places (Ingold 2000). If people see the world from particular cultural vantage points, and if places are shaped by such experiences, it follows that ways of being in the world are shaped by places (and vice versa). Place and culture are the physical manifestations, the *outcome*, of the co-constitutive nature of representation.

There are many reasons why representation is a set of *practices* and *processes* rather than a fixed unit of understanding. There are also many implications that stem from these processual practices. In many cases, the space between the thing being represented and the word used to represent it is relatively small. In the case of, say,



an image and the word ‘dog’, the gap is distinctively narrow. In the case of words like ‘place’ and ‘representation’, the space between becomes somewhat broader. In the words of Albert Einstein, “[i]f two different authors use the words ‘red’, ‘hard’, or ‘disappointed’, no one doubts that they mean approximately the same thing ... but in the case of words such as ‘place’ or ‘space’, whose relationship with psychological experience is less direct, there exists a far-reaching uncertainty of interpretation” (Einstein 1970, p. xii). This “far-reaching uncertainty of interpretation” is aided in its uncertainty by the fact that people view the world through an infinite array of (representational) lenses. According to Webb (2009, p. 2), “[w]hat we see is not what is there, but what our social and cultural traditions and

their contexts give us”, given which, representational frames through which meaning is generated “do not give us a stable or permanent sense of being in the world, but one that is frequently confusing, and always subject to change...”. In other words, “[b]ecause places are meaningful and because we always exist and act in places, we are constantly engaged in acts of interpretation” (Cresswell 1996, p. 13)<sup>27</sup>.

Another parameter in this exchange of meaning can be found in the objects themselves. Not only do people, individually and culturally see the world through different lenses and points of view, but objects themselves carry multiple meanings. According to Hall (1997, p. 3), ““things in themselves’ rarely if ever have any one, single, fixed and unchanging meaning”. Something as seemingly simple as a stone can be a stone, a boundary marker, or a sculpture “depending on what it means – that is, within a certain context of use” (Hall 1997, p. 3). It is by our “use of things, and what we say, think and feel about them – how we represent them – that we *give them meaning*” (Hall 1997, p. 3).

Thus, place, which is particular, cultural and constantly enmeshed in acts of interpretation, highlights the *practice* and a *process* of representation as a communication tool. People *work* to exist within and make sense of the world in which they are enmeshed and, while finding their own perpetually-shifting understandings, they must also deal with the shifting understandings of others. When people interact with each other, they not only accommodate their own personal flux and indeterminacy, but that of others as well. In addition, a third space is found when two people attempt communication with each other and find themselves negotiating the liquid space in-between. It is here, too, that reader and writer meet, lock eyes and dissolve.

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<sup>27</sup> That said, when groups of people follow similar ideas, this sets up a system of boundaries that separate believers and non-believers. The groups with more supporters generate the dominant belief patterns. The nature of boundaries has already been discussed in Chapter 1, and so I will not enter into this aspect of representations of place in this section. Suffice to say that dominant ways of understanding the world perpetuate in a multitude of perhaps unrealised ways.

Herzfeld (2003) argues that the complex nature of representation becomes evident through the act of translating text between languages. He states: “[translating terms as though they had stable meanings is intellectually indigestible](#)” (Herzfeld 2003, p. 109). It is all we have to work with and so make the most of what’s available, “...yet we cannot dispense with it – any more than we could survive without reifying the categories of ordinary social life. Our descriptions, designed to illuminate how and for what the words are used, depreciatingly suggest that the language of the other is so different, so exotic, that we cannot really translate at all”. In terms of translating ethnographic material, Herzfeld (2003, p. 109) suggests that:

...even those of us who believe that psychological inner states are neither attributable to whole populations nor even safely identifiable in individuals write our best ethnographic vignettes as though we could do both those things. The act of translating terms-in-context is a useful fiction because it suggests that we can identify the meanings that social actors intend. We all engage in this fiction, without which ethnographic description would be impossible.

A paradox emerges here, indicating that the “[plausibility of our accounts depends on a device that is itself predicated on an imaginary act of empathy with informants](#)” (Herzfeld 2003, p. 109). An imaginary act of empathy, however, can also be an imaginary act of hostility – or, I argue, an imaginary act of *anything*!

It is in this space, this “[imaginary act](#)”, that potential is found – the potential for love, inspiration, jealousy, frustration and hatred. In this “[imaginary act](#)” possibility and potential are found, manipulated and exercised. Such spaces are the precursor to fertile conversation, to acceptance of difference, to shared (albeit assumed) understanding through to hostility and warfare.

Writing about representation reveals that the concept of representation itself is embedded within its own discussion. Indeed, according to Nealon (1993, p. 222), “[d]iscussions of representation, ... are rendered highly problematic by their

‘necessary dependency’ on the structure of representation itself’. The nature of representation is such that is, in itself, prohibitive of its own condition. Foucault (1970, p. 364) sums up the embedded, intrinsic nature of representation:

The human sciences when dealing with what is representation (in either conscious or unconscious form), find themselves treating as their object what is in fact their condition of possibility. They are always animated, therefore, by a sort of transcendental mobility... [t]hey proceed from that which is given to representation to that which renders representation possible, but which is still representation.

The more we delve into language as a representative structure, the more we can see that representation itself – the means through which we generate meaning and communicate with each other – is slippery. Regardless of our unavoidable reliance on representation and the problems that such reliance reveals, representation provides the cornerstone tool with which we must persist. It is also loaded with potential and possibility.

I have provided here a series of vantage points on the concept of representation. In representing representation, I have set the ground for the next section of writing that seeks to outline the limits of representation.

### **The limits of representation**

Originating in Aristotle’s poetics, representation is “historically and conceptually foundational for our thinking about literature and culture” (Prendergast 2000, p. 1). As a tool, representation works to aid in the transfer of knowledge. But is everything able to be represented? This question is much disputed (Webb 2009). Kant *et al.* (1998, p. 375) suggest that the only real things we have are those that can be represented: “Space is itself nothing but mere representation, and therefore nothing in it can count as real save only what is represented in it”. Prendergast (2000, p. 1) also argues that “[e]verything is representable” – that our experience is only second

hand, mediated through systems of representation. Further, Prendergast (2000, p. 2) suggests that what is presumably meant when something is described as being unrepresentable “is that any given (or conceivable) representation is inadequate to what it seeks to represent”. That is, “[i]t is not that representation as such is impossible; it is rather that it fails in its task...” (Prendergast 2000, p. 2).

But once this inadequacy is acknowledged, Webb (2009) argues, then it must be conceded that there are many things that are unrepresentable. The most significant of these is the capacity to represent our own death. Some say being able to represent such atrocities as the holocaust (see Bernard-Donals and Glejzer 2001) and other instances of profound trauma (Ellis *et al.* 2011) are impossible to reduce to forms of representation. Words are incapable of reaching the spaces of such deeply-felt emotion.

The term used in philosophy to describe individual instances of subjective experience is *qualia*. Derived from the same root as qualitative, *qualia* refer to the *quality* or *property* of things that are *perceived* or *experienced* by a person (OED 2010). According to Jackson (1982, p. 127), “there are certain features of the bodily sensations especially, but also of certain perceptual experiences, which no amount of purely physical information includes”. *Physical information* refers to the knowledge that the physical, chemical and biological sciences have revealed about the world we live in and ourselves. He asserts (1982, p. 127):

Tell me everything physical there is to tell about what is going on in a living brain, the kinds of states, their functional role, their relation to what goes on at other times and in other brains, and so on and so forth, and be I as clever as can be at fitting it all together, you won't have told me about the hurtfulness of pains, the itchiness of itches, pangs of jealousy, or about the characteristic experience of tasting a lemon, smelling a rose, hearing a loud noise or seeing the sky.

Other experiences outside the gamut of representation include such things as “spooky mysterious stuff that no purely informational or functional description of the brain will ever approach” (Gregg 2013, no page given). Other examples can include the things that we see, but fail to notice. This occurs when “our attention is focused elsewhere” (Alvarez and Oliva 2008, p. 392). When one is driving, many kilometres may pass by without any recollection of having driven them. According to Alvarez and Oliva (2008) many traffic accident reports involve drivers simply not seeing obstacles immediately in their path of progress. Switching the brain to a different plane of consciousness is a part of experience that one cannot easily avoid, but also cannot accurately represent.

Equally, some things are simply *unsayable*. We may *feel* the experience, but the words, individually and in combination, are simply not present in human language. Sometimes poetry can convey the nature of such unsayables better than any other medium. In the words of Rainer Maria Rilke (2008) in his 1924 *Duino Elegies*: “Happy are those who know:/ Behind all words, the unsayable stands;/ And from that source alone, the infinite/ Crosses over to gladness, and to us –/Free of our bridges,/Built with the stone of distinctions;/So that always, within each delight,/We gaze at what is purely single and joined”. Rilke suggests here that the *unsayable* – in all of its infinite possibility – “lies behind all representation” (Webb 2009, p. 123). How, then, does one give voice to the *unsayable* without generating an incomplete – or indecipherable – description?

The nature of experience seems to be that any attempt at representation necessarily involves a slippage; an inherent inability to honour experience in its entirety. In part it is an “indeterminacy of sensation” (Webb 2009, p. 84), where words cannot *stand in for* the sensation that is experienced. The experience is in and of itself, too complex and varied, emotional, colourful; there exists a certain depth of feeling – carried by the senses – sensations that are interpreted by the body as much as the mind. Thus it may be within intimacy: where is that space between lovers, where all wordly and worldly perception is lost, where time stops and ears no longer hear? Love, passion, feelings, emotions, instincts blend and blur, it is a place that vanishes



– you know you have been here (or is it there?) – but as a place it is hazy, primal, somewhere else. In fear, too, one experiences such heightened other-worldliness, though differently. *Experience*, it seems, *is experience* in and of itself – every effort to share such experience is fraught with inadequacy.

Our discussion to this point begs the question: if no description can emulate the immediacy of life, then why do it? The answer to this question is not that we are striving for some pure form of knowledge without slippage, but more that through our strivings to describe we come to understand anew the world, ourselves and our processes of description. The geographical discourse and the social sciences more broadly are receptive to such explorations. In fact, the call for new forms of writing and research has been made loud and clear. Across a range of disciplines, authors have “[begun to question taken-for-granted styles of writing and have started to experiment with alternative forms of representing data](#)” (Bagley and Cancienne 2001, p. 221). As far back as the early 1990s, Eisner (1991) was suggesting that breaking away from conventional representational forms is the cutting edge of methodological endeavour. The “[crisis of confidence](#)” inspired by postmodernism (in the 1980s particularly) acted to reform social science. Scholars troubled by ontological, epistemological and axiological limitations began to seek out holes in the universal narratives of scientific study (Ellis *et al.* 2011, no page given). Research needed to find “[new forms for communicating and illuminating the social world researchers inhabit, analyse, construct, and portray](#)” (Eisner 1997, pp. 5-6). Still, though, I have been surprised at how little has changed – indeed, it appears as if the call is going largely unanswered. Occasionally one encounters pieces of novel doctoral research<sup>28</sup>; work that extends the boundaries of what is imagined or possible – but it is not often. Indeed, if one plugs ‘novel PhDs’ into an internet search engine, one receives numerous advertisements for various universities – universities quick to

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<sup>28</sup> Merle Patchett’s (2010) doctoral thesis, ‘Putting animals on display: geographies of taxidermy practice’, comes to mind. Through an investigation into the practice of taxidermy, Patchett seeks to develop a non-representational historical geography, using past *practice* to create an understanding of the present.

inspire students to embark on an ‘exciting’ and ‘worthwhile’ journey. It is understandable that the cogs of knowledge production need to turn slowly, such that knowledge does not get ahead of itself. That said, in academic culture, “the spaces and scholarly recognition available and afforded to academics working in mixed genres is restricted” (Bagley and Cancienne 2001, p. 232). The result is that the most exciting pursuits seem to be occurring outside academia<sup>29</sup>.

## Representation and the geographic discourse

In designating the parameters of the *field*, researchers either draw their own lines or make use of pre-existing designated boundaries – around places, things, people and phenomena – to capture the parameters of those entities in the study. Researchers may, for example, draw lines around places in the first instance (local government areas or township boundaries), and then around groups of people within places (single women, teenage mothers, refugees, Aboriginal people, the homeless or the middle-class) and from these classifications, and others like them, knowledge is gathered, reality is made and the world is understood.

What is overlooked in all of this is that the lines that are drawn around places, people and things are imagined, created, and in turn work to create particular ways of seeing and interacting with the world. As shown in Figures 12-14, the ways in which lines are configured around places represent a given system of belief, but go on to shape the dominant imaginary and the directive force of power. So, too, with lines drawn around groups of people – what is it that makes one Aboriginal? Is it to have black skin, to believe in Aboriginal spirituality, to know culture? Likewise, what is it to be woman? Is it to wear a dress, have a vagina or breasts, or to think, engage and act like a woman? What difference would it be if places beginning with the letter P were chosen to represent reality; or all people who wear blue underwear? I do not argue

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<sup>29</sup> Academics operating in a *non-academic* capacity are prominent here. Harriet Hawkins blog (2013) ‘Creative Geographies: making worlds’ is an impressive example.

for the removal of boundaries or categories (altogether), nor disrespect representational, structured, symbolic research; however, I do believe that there are more options and greater potential for how knowledge is created – infinitely more options – options that require a sense of openness to the possibility of knowledge being and becoming otherwise.

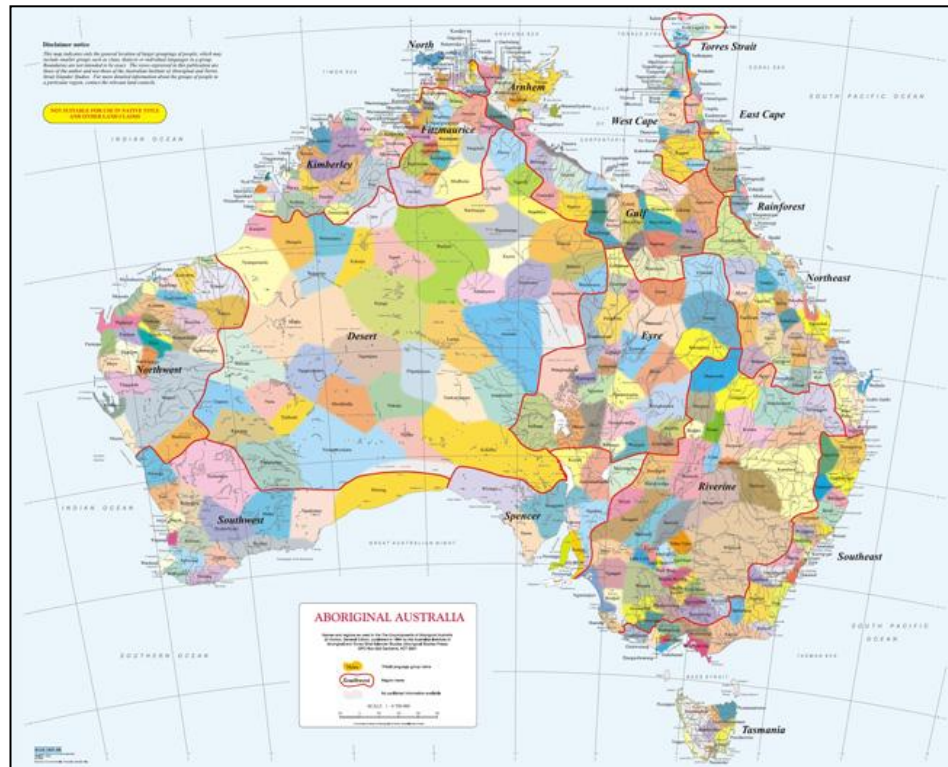


Figure 12. Indigenous language map (Horton 1994)



Figure 13. Map of Australia (Department of Immigration and Border Protection 2012)



Figure 14. 'Seven Sisters Songline' by Josephine Pipalyatjara Mick (1994).

As developed in Chapter 1, the nature of these lines drawn around places as the rational configuration of boundaries led me to follow a less representational set of boundaries in choosing a random line of road between two places in rural remote Tasmania as the *field* of my research.

The present research, ‘drawing the betweenness of place’, grew out of both the humanistic tradition<sup>30</sup> and the ‘radical’ and ‘new’ cultural geography movements<sup>31</sup>, as well as being informed by more contemporary poststructuralist and postmodernist debates<sup>32</sup>. Engaging with the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), Haraway (1991), Muecke (1992), McDowell (1993), Radcliffe (1994), Rose (1996), Morris (1996), and (Doel 1999) among many others, I found a curious discursive spark ignited within and I was inspired and given the confidence to be creative and open to possibilities. Similarly, the political antics and creative geographical adventures<sup>33</sup> of bell hooks (1994), JK Gibson-Graham (1994), Women and Geography Study Group, also known as WGS (1984) and Ian Cook *et al.* (2000) among others, have all stood testimony to the diverse ways in which one might *enact* political activism. The nature of romantic, humanistic and radical political precursors led me to think creatively about my own path – and something hinted at an ongoing relationship with space and place – somewhere intrinsically creative, yet always political.

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<sup>30</sup> By this I refer to the phenomenological, more romantic scholars of humanistic geography, among whom Tuan, Seamon, Relph and Buttimer were prominent. Humanistic geographers were taken to task for ignoring questions of political and structural agency (see Cresswell 2012).

<sup>31</sup> Radical and ‘new cultural’ geography, made up of and informed by Marxist and Feminist critiques (among others), was significant in its desire for change as integral to the process of doing research.

<sup>32</sup> Post-structuralism critiqued the nature of boundaries around categories and the reliance on traditional binaries (nature/culture, for example) as tools to stabilise meaning (see Derrida (1978 [1967]) and Foucault (1970 [1966]) for example).

<sup>33</sup> This is not to suggest that this work was not dealing with highly sensitive and political issues.

Representation is one's ontological vantage point. It is how one sees the world. The slippage then becomes multiple – between the word and the thing being represented and between the various sensory bodies. Let's dance! What is there to lose?

What I have shown is that representation itself and what representation seeks to represent is not actually fixed and static; rather, representation and what is represented are unfixed, porous and fluid. Representation is a grasp at creating some stability in an ever moving world. It is to these resulting representations that we cling in searching for a reality that we can all understand; understand each other and the world in which we live. Rather than try to lock the world in a captured moment, like a photograph, non-representational thinking seeks to run with the ever moving moment of the present. Rather than drawing lines around people and places and classifying them and categorising them, practitioners of non-representational thinking move with their subjects, or make their selves the subject, and try to glimpse the moment of the occurrence. Rather than classify the subject as a this or a that and draw conclusions based on the sum of the this-that-ness, they observe individuals – unique individuals, who make patterns, draw lines – lines that are not circles, lines that do not circumscribe.

William Cunningham wrote in 1559 that the role of “[geographie ... is the imitation, and description of the face, and picture of th'e earth](#)” (Chapple 1993, p. 112). From the outset, then, representation has sat at the centre of what geography *is* and *does*. How we configure representation as a concept is imperative for the outcomes that are created. In recent geographical debates, the development and use of non-representation theories have made significant inroads into experimental representation. It is to this set of theories and ideas that I now turn.

## **Non-representational thinking**

Non-representational theory (NRT) has a substantial epistemological history (Cadman 2009, p. 457). It emerged amongst other shifts in the humanities and social

sciences, along with actor-network theory, performance studies and the notion of the emotional body (Cadman 2009). The central tenets of NRT are *practice*, *everyday life* and *performativity* (Cadman 2009) or what Thrift (2008) describes as “the geography of what happens”. It appeals to those who want to “make performances in the interstices of everyday life” (Thrift 2008, p. vii).

Strongly associated with Nigel Thrift and such of his colleagues as J.D Dewsbury, Derek McCormack, John Wylie and Hayden Lorimer, NRT “has become an umbrella term for diverse work that seeks better to cope with our self-evidently more-than-human, more-than-textual, multisensual worlds” (Lorimer 2005, p.83). According to Lorimer (2005, p. 84) “the focus falls on how life takes shape and gains expression in shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, pre-cognitive triggers, practical skills, affective intensities, enduring urges, unexceptional interactions and sensuous dispositions”. He adds that “attention to these kinds of expression ... offers an escape from the established academic habit of striving to uncover meanings and values that apparently await our discovery, interpretation, judgement and ultimate representation” (2005, p. 84). It is a knotty discourse and one not elemental to this research *per se*, suffice to say that, I too, support such discursive explorations.

NRT has also, however, become a site of contention. It is argued by Cadman (2009, p. 462) that the “key motif” of NRT is to “overcome the ‘dead’ geographies of representation”. While a reaction to representation is evident, the claim that representation is *dead* is a strong one, and though Thrift and Dewsbury (2000) may be willing to make such an assertion, it is a claim to which other proponents of NRT would not necessarily ascribe. Another perspective is that of Anderson and Harrison (2010, p. 19), for whom NRT is more a *style of thinking* that, rather than being anti-representation *per se*, seeking to engage with representation as itself a “lively and undetermined act” (Cresswell 2012, p. 4). According to Anderson and Harrison (2010, p. 2, italics added), NRT is a diverse body of work, linked by its sense of affirmation and experimentation. It provides an “invitation to do and think otherwise”.



Representational research makes use of certain epistemological tools to set the parameters of the geographical imaginary. It is not that representation is a “[form of stasis in an already achieved world](#)” (Cresswell 2012, p. 5). It is more that boundaries drawn, and groupings (of subjects, places and things) created by various instruments of knowledge production, representation included, act to create what NRT argues is an *assumed, constructed and synthetic* dominant discursive paradigm. NRT is a reaction to the type of meaning that representation creates and the methods by which that meaning is produced. Representation asks “[the wrong questions in the wrong way](#)” (Thrift 2008, p. vii). As it provides the mechanism through which its members “[make sense of the world, within which they organise their experience and justify their actions](#)” (Anderson and Harrison 2010, p. 4), it follows that such mechanisms have power and influence – a power that is not necessarily immediately apparent.

NRT focuses attention on the less represented aspects of human life; everyday actions and “[the ways in which subjects know the world without knowing it](#)” (Nash 2000, p. 655). Thus Dewsbury *et al.* (2002, p. 438) state:

[\[n\]on-representational theory takes representation seriously; representation not as a code to be broken or as a \[sic\] illusion to be dispelled \[sic\] rather representations are apprehended as performative in themselves; as doings. The point here is to redirect attention from the \*posited meaning\* towards the \*material compositions and conduct\* of representations.](#)

If representation might be compared to the taking of a photograph, NRT is the capture of a moving image – both using representational techniques, but in very different ways, with very different agendas. NRT engages with representation and is thus not immune to representation, but, rather, NRT addresses representation as a *practice* and a *process*, as its definition suggests. If representations are thought of as bounded units in the general use of language, then NRT is calling for us to see language – words and concepts – as bounded-openness.



Let us briefly take a closer look at what NRT *is* and *does* – and purports to *be*. As advanced by Thrift (2008, p. 2):

It is a little bit tortuous because there is a lot of ground-clearing to do, a lot of hacking back of the theoretical undergrowth in order to get at the nub of the matter. And it is portentous because it involves taking some of the small signs of everyday life for wonders and this involves all manner of risks, and not least pretentiousness. All I can say is that I think that the risk is worth it in order to achieve a diagnosis of the present which is simultaneously a carrier wave for new ways of doing things.

Moving away from representation (and the corresponding social distinction between ‘individual’ and ‘society’) leads to “an emphasis on the ongoing composition of the social from within the ‘rough ground’ of practices and the concrete richness of life” (Anderson and Harrison 2010, p. 17). Practitioners of NRT have developed a vantage point that enables them to reveal aspects of the world hitherto un-presented in academic knowledge. NRT is able to say things about knowledge and the world in ways that illuminate the spaces of the less-structured, liquid, emotional, felt and moving world: “There is a sense in all of this work of an emphasis on the sense of movement, the kinaesthetic sense, as the way in which we can understand the world and of kinaesthetic space, a fluid space in which no fixed standards of representation exist” (Thrift and Dewsbury 2000, p. 419). NRT, as a way of approaching the world, offers new vantage points that are outside previous ways of gathering information and making knowledge:

Non-representation theory is a lens through which to approach various practices in the world – as is the concept of affect. NRT generally attends to the extra-linguistic forces and practices that transpire in space. It recognises that not all actions are a result of reflexive ‘cognitive deliberations’ but rather emerge through pre-discursive embodied dispositions, gestures, enactments that are already entangled in the fabric of the world (Tan 2012, p. 536).

Why take this road through NRT? As a (very) early career geographer it could be said that I have the option of avoiding NRT; “I could have just ignored NRT altogether. It is perfectly possible to do this, and I suspect many eminent geographers are happy doing just that” (Cresswell 2012, p. 4). NRT contributes to the present journey because it helps identify discourses within which both betweenness and NRT are enmeshed: mobility, emotions, atmospheres, performativity and affect, for example, have formed part of my discursive doctoral journey, my journey between two places, with the result that it became much more difficult to look the other way<sup>34</sup>. NRT offers an opportunity to ground the nature of betweenness. It is however, just a road map and not the road itself.

I have set out here to do no more than acknowledge the usefulness of the central insights of NRT, peruse these quickly, and set them aside to be checked back if need be. Hopefully the path ahead will not require more than an occasional glance back at the map, and maybe not even that. With luck, the journey itself will determine its own direction; all we have to do is sit back and enjoy the ride.

## The Everyday

The *everyday* is a generalising term we give to things we do on a daily basis, or things we consider commonplace (OED 2010). According to Heller ([1970] 1984, p.

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<sup>34</sup> It was not until some way through the writing of this thesis that I came to recognise the relationship between betweenness and the aims of NRT/more-than-representation. The ideas for this dissertation grew out of the things that NRT seeks to (more-than) re-present. Cresswell suggests that the same criticisms could or should be laid upon NRT that were brought to bear on humanistic geography by social constructivism; but this is not the case, I think, because NRT evolved in *response to* humanist geography and social constructivism. Geographers of the current era have grown up with Feminist and Marxist agendas as part of their (albeit often undergraduate) intellectual foundation. Marxist and Feminist values sit at the core of my ontological being – I am unable to be other. It is my understanding however, that NRT is not in direct conflict with the values of Marxism or Feminism – rather it is a rally at the ways in which they are *done*.

3), “[w]e may define ‘everyday life’ as the aggregate of those individual reproduction factors which, *pari passu*, make social reproduction possible”<sup>35</sup>. Human beings have developed structures of living that facilitate reproduction – reproduction of the individual, reproduction of society and ultimately reproduction of the species (Heller [1970] 1984). The *Dictionary of Human Geography* describes everyday life as “[a] realm associated with ordinary, routine and repetitive aspects of social life that are pervasive and yet frequently overlooked and taken-for-granted” (Pinder 2009). The *everyday* may be referred to as the quotidian, the day-to-day, the run-of-the-mill; it refers to the world closest to us as individuals, “those most repeated actions, those most travelled journeys, those most inhabited spaces that make up, literally, the day to day. This is the landscape closest to us, the world most immediately met” (Highmore 2002, p. 1).

The everyday, however, is also a “value and quality – everydayness” (Highmore 2002, p. 1) – determined in part by the individual, but also through systems, cultures and codes:

Here the most travelled journey can become the dead weight of boredom, the most inhabited space a prison, the most repeated action an oppressive routine. Here the everydayness of life might be experienced as a sanctuary, or it might bewilder or give pleasure, it may delight or depress. Or its special quality might be its lack of qualities. It might be, precisely, the unnoticed, the inconspicuous, the unobtrusive (Highmore 2002, p. 1).

Or, indeed, varying amounts of all these. The codes, systems and structures that humans have tested and evolved over hundreds of thousands of years now, every day, guide an individual’s immediate scope of action – it is within these frames of culture and governance that people enact their lives. The discourse on the everyday

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<sup>35</sup> *Pari passu* refers to “equal footing” (OED 2010). In the contemporary setting, *pari passu* is more commonly expressed as *part and parcel*. Heller’s use of the term above refers to ‘equal force’.

covers a broad range of vantage points that include such phenomena as experiences and habits. In the writing that follows we will meander through the key elements of the everyday, and through such meandering illuminate some of the aspects of the everyday as they inter-relate with betweenness.

Human beings are drawn to the stand out features, the *icons* of any cultural landscape. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (2010) defines an icon as “a person or thing regarded as a representative symbol or as worthy of veneration”. The term icon derives from the word *ikon*, “[image, figure, representation](#)”, and from the “[Greek eikon, likeness, image, portrait](#)”. According to Perec ([1974] 1999, p. 209):

[\[w\]hat speaks to us, ... is always the big event, the untoward, the extraordinary... as if life reveals itself only by way of the spectacular, as if what speaks, what is significant, is always abnormal: natural cataclysms or historical upheavals, social unrest, political scandals... the daily papers talk of everything except what happens daily... the front page splash, the banner headlines. Railway trains only begin to exist when they are derailed, and the more passengers that are killed, the more the trains exist.](#)

So too with celebrities: stand out features might include people (Madonna, say, or Barack Obama, or Serena Williams); characters (Minnie Mouse or Dr Who); architecture (The Sydney Opera House); landscape features (Uluru or Niagara Falls) or works of art (the Mona Lisa). The list of categories is endless.

In this research, however, I argue that what may be deemed iconic is not necessarily determined by its degree of public recognition, but through its capacity to be recognized and named at the scale of the individual and, thus, the iconic may be categorised according to scale. Illustrating icons at the scale of place, we might recognise Tasmanian cultural icons such as Mt Wellington, Salamanca Square, the Tasmanian devil<sup>36</sup>, Port Arthur, the Overland Track, Queenstown or the recent

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<sup>36</sup> Including the images of the Tasmanian devil used to promote Tasmania for tourism purposes.

acquisition: the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA). Moving closer to the individual in scale I think of my tin of photos, a toy from my childhood, birth certificate and favourite hat as iconic – perhaps these are the things I would take in a fire.

In the case of this research, the iconic refers to both the publically venerable *and* the individually nameable – and is, thus, co-constitutive of representation (see Chapter 3). What people can name they can either lay claim to through possession, or simple identification and recognition. My bed, coffee machine, collection of clothing and fabric scissors are all nameable objects and, in these cases, valued (though replaceable). They merit the descriptor, ‘iconic’. But where does this leave the everyday? Am I saying that the everyday is iconic? Perhaps. First we must step sideways.

When Perec ([1974] 1999, p. 210) asks: “[h]ow should we take account of, question, describe what happens every day and recurs every day: the banal, the quotidian, the obvious, the common, the ordinary, the infra-ordinary, the background noise, the habitual? ...”; when he asks further: “[h]ow are we to speak of these common things”, I know that to which he refers. He ([1974] 1999, p. 50) offers a place to begin in this somewhat simple exercise:

Note down what you can see. Anything worthy of note going on [sic]. Do you know how to see what’s worthy of note? Is there anything that strikes you? Nothing strikes you. You don’t know how to see. You must set about it more slowly, almost stupidly. Force yourself to write down what is of no interest, what is most obvious, most common, most colourless.

This is not a simple task and I am prompted to ask, why do it? This is what happened:

A keyboard, white, that wobbles. Quotes on cut out pieces of paper, all the text in different colours. A hot cup of tea in a black mug. A coffee

plunger still with coffee grains. A tin of powdered milk. A green, glass gin bottle with a little water in the bottom. An open packet of dark organic 85% cocoa chocolate. A Duralex coffee glass, cold and empty with coffee in the bottom. A nearly empty packet of Ceylon Orange Pekoe teabags. ‘Chapter 1’. The abstract concept of ‘everyday life’. Perec page 210. Two screens. Many post-it notes arranged in patterns. My Honours thesis, gold plated title. A lamp. My strong glasses. A hand mirror with Japanese fabric. More quotes, more papers in manila folders, labelled, more cut outs, more colours.

Does this mean I know how to look? I did not write the things I couldn’t see. I did not write all of the things I could see. Now that I look again, there were many things I did not see first time round. I did not write about me, or why I am here right now at 8.23 pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> October, writing. I did not write about my ear ache, or the argument I just had with my partner, or that I had cheese and rye sourdough for dinner<sup>37</sup>. I did not write that I do this nearly every night – write that is – that I like to eat celery and carrots, that I probably drink too much tea. According to Moran (2004, p. 57):

The everyday remains unnoticed because it is practised thoughtlessly and dismissed as banal and boring; it is made up of intangible, transitory phenomena such as gestures, habits and routines; and it evades conventional forms of knowledge, which tend to abstract and intellectualize experience, overlooking the phenomenology of concrete experience.

Perec ([1974] 1999, p. 210) argues, however, that such “gestures, habits and routines” are perhaps not significant, but important – and, thus, they need to be questioned. He states:

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<sup>37</sup> Next day: same bread, same cheese. Sometimes I feel like a prisoner of war.

What we need to question is bricks, concrete, glass, our table manners,  
our utensils, our tools, the way we spend our time, our rhythms. To  
question that which seems to have ceased forever to astonish us. We live,  
true, we breathe, true; we walk, we open doors, we go down staircases,  
we sit at a table in order to eat, we lie down in a bed in order to sleep.  
How? Where? When? Why?

Perec is not the only one asking these questions. The discourse on the everyday has gained considerable breadth in the post-modern era. While it is not practicable to investigate these in depth here, the key themes and thinkers of the everyday can at least be acknowledged. The latter include de Certeau (1984 [1988]); Lefebvre and Levich (1987) ; Lefebvre (2004); (1971); Thrift (2008); Smith (1987); Heller ([1970] 1984); Bachelard ([1958] 1994) and of course, those already cited: Highmore (2002, p. 1), Moran (2004, p. 57), and Perec ([1974] 1999, p. 209). From their writings, and others with more specific foci, a diverse set of themes concerning the everyday has emerged. These include atmospheric attunement (Stewart, K 2011); judgement (Anderson 2005); the body (Harrison 2000; Carolan 2008); politics (Colebrook 2002); Indigenous geographies (Coombes *et al.* 2013); leisure and tourism (Crouch 2000; Edensor 2001); creative resistance (Darts 2004); academic practise (Dewsbury and Naylor 2002); affect (Duff 2010); driving (Edensor 2003, 2004; Sheller 2004; Thrift 2004a); rhythms (Elden 2004) ; touch (Hetherington 2003); spiritual practice (Holloway 2003); architecture (Kraftl 2010); emotion (MacKian 2004), cyber/space (Madge and O'Connor 2005); walking (Middleton 2011; Pinder 2011); history (Moran 2004); feminist methodologies (Nast 1994); fear (Pain 2010); shame (Probyn 2004); performing arts (Rogers 2012); landscapes (Rose 2002); the contemporary 'derive' (Smith 2010); communications technology (Thrift and French 2002; Thrift 2004b); habits (Wood *et al.* 2002); waiting (Bissell 2007); vibration (Bissell 2010) and vision (Bissell 2009).

When Dewsbury and Naylor (2002, p. 254) argue that “everyday actions make up the grander facades of institutional agendas, empirical projects and disciplinary schools of thought” I am reminded of the political nature of the everyday. While seemingly

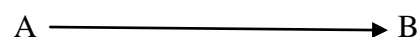
banal and repetitive, the everyday is shaped by processes of power and control. I am reminded that “...beneath the 'management', 'mapping' and 'exploitation' of the natural world, the natural world – ‘us ’ – is messily performed in our physical involvement with our sites of inquiry, and the uncertain, stammering and tense, event of discovery and its recording” (Dewsbury and Naylor 2002, p. 254). I am reminded that the everyday may be an entrapment – and indeed, feminist scholars have sought to give presence to the domestic spaces of the home as sites of control and unhappiness. That said, the everyday, as an area of research, offers an opening to the ways the world is practiced, not only in terms of the ways in which worlds *are* practiced, but the ways in which they *might be* practised.

Actualising the patterns and imperceptibles that configure the everyday relies on a commitment to the “elusory nature of experience” (Harrison 2000, p. 501); acuity for “shifts in emotional tonality” (Harrison 2000, p. 509); a “commitment to speculations, experiments, recognitions, engagements, and curiosity...” (Stewart 2000, p. 1027); and an engagement with the “unthought” (Harrison 2000, p. 502), the “banal” (Perec [1974] 1999, p. 209), the “fragmentary and elusive” (Moran 2004, p. 57), and the “intangible” (Moran 2004, p. 57) but nonetheless “charged atmospheres” (Stewart, K 2011, p. 445) of the everyday world.

## The Journey

### Introduction

Stripped back to its most essential characteristics, movement is expressed as “getting from point A to point B” (Cresswell 2006, p. 2).



Indeed, *movement* is the key concern of transport geography’s extensive discursive history (Cresswell 2010) . Grounded in positivist spatial science, according to Hoyle



and Knowles (1999, p. 2) the core objective of transport geography is to explain the “socio-economic, industrial and settlement frameworks within which transport networks develop and transport systems operate”. While transportation geography contributes a significant body of data, it does not go far enough. Keeling (2007, p. 219) states that “transportation, at least on one level, is being treated as merely one-dimensional networks of conduits through which inanimate objects flow without purpose or design”. Transport geography’s perfunctory approaches to movement paved the way for investigations into the significance of the journey – made by real people in living landscapes. As Cresswell (2010, p. 5) states: “While transport geography’s main concern might be summarized [sic] by the need to figure out how to efficiently get from A to B, the mobilities turn motto may well be ‘it’s about more than getting from A to B’ ... it is time spent on the move with significance”.

To study, describe, analyse and understand movement in its many guises – through its multiple causes, systems and histories – is to generate complex geographies of mobility (Cresswell 2006), and mobility, best described as *meaningful movement*, is tied to its ongoing enactment: it is “practiced, it is experienced, it is embodied” (Cresswell 2006, p. 3). While fundamental and significant, the practised nature of mobility and its representation has been, in the past, discursively monocular and somewhat limited in scope<sup>38</sup>. The study of movement – under the auspices of the ‘new mobilities paradigm’ (Hannam *et al.* 2006; Sheller and Urry 2006) – seeks to address movement from multiple scales, as well as its relationship with power, identity and everyday life (Cresswell 2010). As a result, it is now centre stage in the social science discourse.

In this thesis, the concept of *journeying* has been harnessed as a facet of the broader concept of movement and a tool in the extension of the mobilities discourse. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (2010) defines journey as “an act of travelling from one

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<sup>38</sup> Transport geography and migration research are two examples of this. Cresswell (2010) suggests that this limitation arises because transport and migration discourse focus on a singular form of moving – where mobility studies focus on movement at multiple and concurrent scales.

place to another”. Adding detail to this definition, to *journey*, in the first instance, requires an act of displacement; for one to depart; to turn a key, to open a door, to take a step or turn one’s wheels. In order for a departure to be enacted, a threshold must be crossed – to leave one tangible, quantifiable entity, be it a building, a town, a city, one place, ‘the point of origin’ – with the aim of reaching another<sup>39</sup>.

This thesis concerns the space and time<sup>40</sup> that are marked by the click of the door in the latch. Neither here nor there; neither the place of departure nor the place of arrival<sup>41</sup>, *the journey* provides access to a space quite literally *in-between*; a literal and practised space between. ‘Between’ is a term related to journey. Between originates in the “Old English *betweonum* “between, among, by turns,” Mercian *betwinum*, from bi- “by”... + *tweonum* dative plural of *tweon* “two each” (cf. Gothic *tweih-nai* “two each”)”. In the case of this research, the term *between* quantifies, designates and marks the space between two points – the origin and the destination – and thus is synonymous with *the journey*. The journey, however, is a carrier of other stories of between and a medium through which those other betweennesses may be realised. *Betweenness*, then, may be conceptualised and described, in the first instance, as the *sum* of those betweennesses. Given that this thesis seeks to gather an understanding of – to give presence to – *betweenness*, gathering stories found in the literal in-between (between A and B) is the logical place to begin<sup>42</sup>. The most

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<sup>39</sup> The use of the body as a physical marker of place traversed does not exclude imaginary, emotional or psychological journeys as being representative of mobile states; it is more that the circumstances of this research call for the physical journey to take place.

<sup>40</sup> Space and time are used in this context to refer to the multiple, simultaneous events that constitute the closing of a door. It is the physical – the action and felt experience of the latch; it is the aural experience in the sound of the click; it is the visual experience of seeing the door close. These layers of experience occur in both space and time.

<sup>41</sup> The notion of the journey in relation to the methodology of this thesis is discussed, although somewhat briefly, in Chapter 2.

<sup>42</sup> It is conceded that establishing the meaning of key concepts is the sort of basic information that is usually provided early in a thesis. However, integral to this investigation is the idea that terms so

common journey (between two places) that a person undertakes offers an opportunity to find layers of experience and perspective.

As the journey provides an entry point into the between and, further, that the sum of several journeys may add to the quantity of between(s), what do qualitative aspects of the between reveal of betweenness? What are these qualitative aspects of the between and how might they assist, or add to, the garnering of an understanding of betweenness?

To undertake a journey one must follow a path, a track, a route. Such a path may take the form of a road, and in the contemporary era this is very often the case. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, more than 800 000km of road currently exist in Australia and 90 percent of passenger travel occurs by road. The development of roads across the country, over many decades, reflects the changing perception of acceptable transport and road systems and, thus, the economic, social and political processes at any particular time (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002). The evolution of roads in Australia has its origins in Aboriginal tracks which braided and interlinked the country, which were cared for by generational custodians and formed a significant part of the story-telling and culture of the Aboriginal people. As stated on page 59, as the Aboriginal tracks evolved over thousands of years, to respond to the surrounding geography, it is a logical progression, in terms of development, that early European settlers would make use of these tracks, initially on foot and then via horse-drawn carts and carriages and eventually in motor vehicles. While many of the more contemporary roads have been plotted through the use of global-positioning systems, maps and landform analysis, or made with absolutely no regard for past land use management of indigenous people, on many roads in Tasmania, the track-like origins are discernible to the perceptive and sensitive traveller.

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inherently elusive should be allowed to emerge within a logic of *unfolding*. *This*, it is submitted is the appropriate place for this discussion.

Journeying through a landscape, by whatever means, offers the potential to *access* said landscape. According to Ingold (1993, p. 152) a “dwelling perspective” allows one to perceive landscape as “an enduring record of – and testimony to – the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in so doing, have left there something of themselves”. The journey, thus, becomes a window to other times, other ways of life, circumstances and situations. Perceiving landscape in this way “enfolds the lives and times of predecessors who, over the generations, have moved around in it and played their part in its formation. To perceive the landscape is therefore to carry out an act of remembrance, and remembering is not so much a matter of calling up an internal image, stored in the mind, as of engaging perceptually with an environment that is itself pregnant with the past”. There is significance embedded within journeying. All people journey and the places through which one journeys both hold and shape the telling of old and formation of new stories.

### Why use the term ‘journey’?

First, let us consider the *reason* or intent contained within the journey<sup>43</sup>. The nature of the story provides an entry point into the concept of journeying. Journeys may be practiced and described through various actions and terminologies that reflect the “symbolic intent” of the traveller (Vogel 1974, p. 185). Narratives provide a mechanism through which journeying may be characterised. Stories, according to Vogel (1974, p. 185), carry a journey, or *type of journey* as a central motif: “Every story ever told ... has movement by some character from one place to another. Consequently, every story is a candidate for ingenious interpretation as an entry in the most ancient body of narrative, identified by the archetypal image of the ‘journey’”. A pilgrimage, for instance, is different in symbolic intent to a quest, or an

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<sup>43</sup> It is important to note, as mentioned in Chapter 2, that I have specifically asked participants to allow me to accompany them on a journey with them. That journey was requested to be their most regular journey that they do alone, between two places.

odyssey<sup>44</sup>. The term *journey*, by contrast implies that the person moving has no specific goal associated with the journey – except, of course, reaching the destination. According to Vogel (1974), almost all works of literature have been drawn to and by such movement between places and towards goals as a way of accessing broader knowledge about human being in the world.

Through journeying, landscapes and human life are brought together (Vergunst and Árnason 2012). To journey through a landscape provides a mechanism through which people and the landscape may interact. Moving back and forth over the same landscape, returning again and again, allows the journey or the relationship between the journeyers and journeyed to obtain depth and character. When people come to know something thoroughly, through many repetitions, they start to perform those tasks less consciously, without paying very much attention while doing them (Benjamin 2003). Making a journey on a single occasion, or at least not regularly, is the stuff of travel writing; to journey in travel is to see things anew, with fresh perspective and wide eyes. Making a journey again and again over the same terrain provides for a different kind of *seeing*, but perhaps not for everyone in the same way.

Journeying repeatedly from a particular point of origin to a particular destination can induce multiple responses from mild pattern formation, to habit, and even, in extreme

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<sup>44</sup> According to Vogel (1974), to *wander* is to move with a sense of one's destiny; a *quest* involves having a mission and a goal that is graspable; to undertake a *pilgrimage* is to strive for a spiritual plateau; an *odyssey* has a purpose, to reach a destination, but does not have a mission in a spiritual or moral sense; and *going-forth* involves having a hint that there is a purpose, but this purpose is not revealed until the end. As Vogel defines it, there is no difference between an odyssey and a journey as it has been defined in the text. However, while they are similar, an odyssey is considered long, eventful and adventurous, whereas (particularly in the context of this thesis), a journey is an everyday and straightforward progression to a familiar destination.

cases, psychological addiction<sup>45</sup>. According to Seamon (1980, p. 152), a habit may be described as “any acquired behaviour that has become more or less involuntary”. He asserts that “everyday movement” is characterised by its “habitual nature” (Seamon 1980, p. 152)<sup>46</sup>. In the following quote by Seamon (1980, p. 153) (and one of the group members of his study; the interviewee’s words are italicised), it is evident that this person finds their journey unremarkable – precisely due to the regularity of her journey between home and school:

...[m]any movements are conducted by some preconscious process which guides behaviours without the person’s need to be consciously aware of their happening. As one group member succinctly described the process, ‘*You get up and go without really thinking, you know exactly where you have to go, and you get there but you really don’t think about getting there while you’re on your way.*’ The phrasing of this statement in almost poetic fashion points to a kind of automatic unfolding of movement with which the group member has little or no conscious contact. She has no recollection of the great number of footsteps, turns,

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<sup>45</sup> Trainspotting involves an avid enthusiasm for all things train, though particularly to see trains and identify them based on their timetabled route and physical description, make and model. This phenomenon is often associated with Asperger syndrome, an autism spectrum disorder. Gambling is another example of a habit becoming an addiction.

<sup>46</sup> Seamon (1980, p. 157) refers to these movements as “*body-ballet – a set of integrated behaviours which sustain a particular task or aim ... Body-ballets are frequently an integral part of a manual skill or artistic sensibility; their sum may constitute a particular person’s livelihood*”. When body-ballets extend over a significant period of time Seamon (1980, p. 187) refers to them as a “*time-space routine*”, that is, “*a set of habitual bodily behaviours which extends through a considerable portion of time*”. Examples of this might be a daily routine from waking in the morning to going back to bed at night. The sum of these individual behaviours (body-ballets and time-space routines) Seamon refers to as “*place-ballet*” or “*the fusion of many space-time routines and body-ballets in terms of place*” (Seamon 1980, p. 159, italics in original). I do not seek to discredit this perspective, I merely need to iterate that I aim to move in a different direction and these ideas by Seamon help qualify what that direction is.

stops, and starts that in sum compose the walks from home to school. She finds herself at her destination without having paid the least bit of attention to the movement as it happened at the time.

However, it is precisely this habitual behaviour that offers insights into the nuances of the journey as a literal between and, thus, *betweenness*. Stepping on from Seamon, this thesis seeks to extend that interest in movement, mobility, and journeying, and in so doing, to explore the way things *are* seen and experienced – whether one is daydreaming about something else or not really focused or, conversely, acutely focused.

Creative practitioners have trained their media of perception in the art of seeing and sensing the ambient world. They are alive to *betweenness* – though it is unlikely that they would use this term to describe what *betweenness* might be. It is more likely that they would not use any term at all to describe this awareness, phenomena or sensibility – because it is something that they will strive to find, to generate, to provide access to – rather than to name, classify or represent.

### Journeying alone

Being alone in the landscape is not without complex understandings. These may be characterised by solitude or awakening, or they may be terrifying, and while different landscapes have different experiences built in, the same landscape can offer different vantage points at different times<sup>47</sup>: “Even in familiarity and habitual rhythmic engagement, the meaning, our relationship with things can change in register; slight adjustments of feeling over time becoming more significant” (Crouch 2010, p. 5). Indeed, being alone in the landscape may provide an opportunity to access *thoughtful* spaces. Being alone provides space for thought: conscientious, disciplined thought; drifting, meandering thought and profound thought. For Suzuki ( [1959] 1993, pp.

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<sup>47</sup> Even though I interviewed participants while in their company, I was interested in the most common journey that they do alone. I was interested in the stories of their solo experiences.

254-255), “loneliness engendered by travelling leads one to reflect upon the meaning of life, for life is after all a travelling from one unknown to another unknown”.

When alone one may feel solitude; this is a *sought after* composite of feelings. Most commonly associated with nature, solitude may also be experienced in highly populated urban places. According to Jackson (1970, p. 106), “[t]here are few greater delights than to walk up and down ... in the evening alone with thousands of other people...”. Loneliness on the other hand is externally *imposed* and may be difficult to overcome. Various degrees of either of these senses of awareness are possible, as well as shifting states of both. Solitude and loneliness and their various combinations affect the experience one has in the landscape, what one sees and how one responds. The place too plays a part. According to Solnit ([2005] 2010, p. 131) “[s]olitude in the city is about the lack of other people or rather their distance beyond a door or wall, but in remote places it isn’t an absence but the presence of something else, a kind of humming silence in which solitude seems as natural to your species as to any other, words strange rocks you may or may not turn over”. Solitude, it seems, carries a lush and pregnant space from which to explore the world through which one moves.

The cycles, rhythms and patterns of movement provide room for reflection while journeying. Passing through a landscape provides multiple, consecutive triggers as the surrounding space constantly changes and shifts. Moving through means that the immediate surrounds change – the mobile viewing moment glides past your window when driving or your immediate surroundings cruise past you when walking. In this sense, what you become aware of is, in part, determined by the speed at which you travel and your relative attentiveness. Solnit (2001, p. 5) describes slow movement (walking) as being close to doing nothing: “I kept coming back to this route for respite from my work and for my work too, because thinking is generally thought of as doing nothing in a production-oriented culture, and doing nothing is hard to do. It’s best done by disguising it as doing something, and the something closest to doing nothing is walking”.



So, too, does the place through which you move change. The rhythms of each day shift, as morning passes to midday, through afternoon towards darkness, to the black or moonlit night, before returning again to light; and, the seasons also change from the warmth of summer through to the cold of winter and back again. The nature of entropy means that systems are always in a state of decay towards chaos, but the energy put in means that new order is very often present. In addition to this, the time for which the traveller has not been present is also evident in the landscape. Possible futures and possible histories are also perceptible in the landscape though which one travels. These journeys in the imagination are an integral part of being alone. Going over in one's mind what *has been* and rehearsing what might *come next* is what people do in order to participate in the world of social interaction.

What has been shown above is that why and how one journeys forms a complex array of parameters that belie their presence in the simple movement between A and B. Such ponderings prompt the question: when asked to consider the journey as a whole unit, how might one imagine this space between A and B, and further, how might one give presence to such imaginings? It is to such questions that we now turn.

### Journeying drawing lines

Though trivial at first glance, according to Ingold (2007) imagining the journey carries a greater significance than it might at first suggest. While it may not be high on a list of priorities – whether planning your day or reflecting on where you have been – imagining the journey forms an integral part of moving around. The way people imagine the place through which they move determines how they interact with it (Ingold 2007).

There are many different ways of imagining a journey. Looking to traditional forms of movement may provide some insight into other possible scenarios or ways of imagining one's journey. Further, contrasting different modes of journeying may assist in identifying differences between groups. Wiebe (1989) contrasts the journeying practices of the Inuit of Northern Canada with those of the (British) Royal

Navy. Ingold (2007, p. 75) takes this argument further when he labels the Inuit's, and others such as the Australian Aboriginal's and general seafarer's perception and practice of journeying as "wayfaring".

*Wayfaring* describes a form of movement where those journeying are in harmony with the landscape; finding their way around it using markers and tracks, stories and highly nuanced and practiced understanding of the places through which they move. "As he [sic] proceeds ... the wayfarer has to sustain himself [sic], both perceptually and materially, through an active engagement with the country that opens up along his [sic] path" (Ingold 2007, p. 78). Ingold (2007, p. 79) argues that "the traveller's movement – his orientation and pace – is continually responsive to his [sic] perceptual monitoring of the environment that is revealed along the way". He observes that (2007, p. 75), for the Inuit, "*as soon as a person moves he [sic] becomes a line*", tracking the landscape – always on the lookout for signs, tracks, lines that lead to the sought-after goal (Ingold 2007, p. 75). To travel in this way is to see the world as "*a mesh of interweaving lines rather than a continuous surface*" and, thus, to journey is to "*thread [one's] way through this world rather than routing across it*" (Ingold 2011, p. 151).

Drawing the way that journeys are enacted gives some presence to the way those journeys are imagined. Ingold borrows a drawn line from Sterne (1978) to highlight the gestural properties of the wayfaring line. In Sterne's drawing (see Figure 15), the path of the tip of a walking stick in the air is recorded in ink. The drawing seeks to demonstrate how the journey of a wayfarer is fluid and candid.

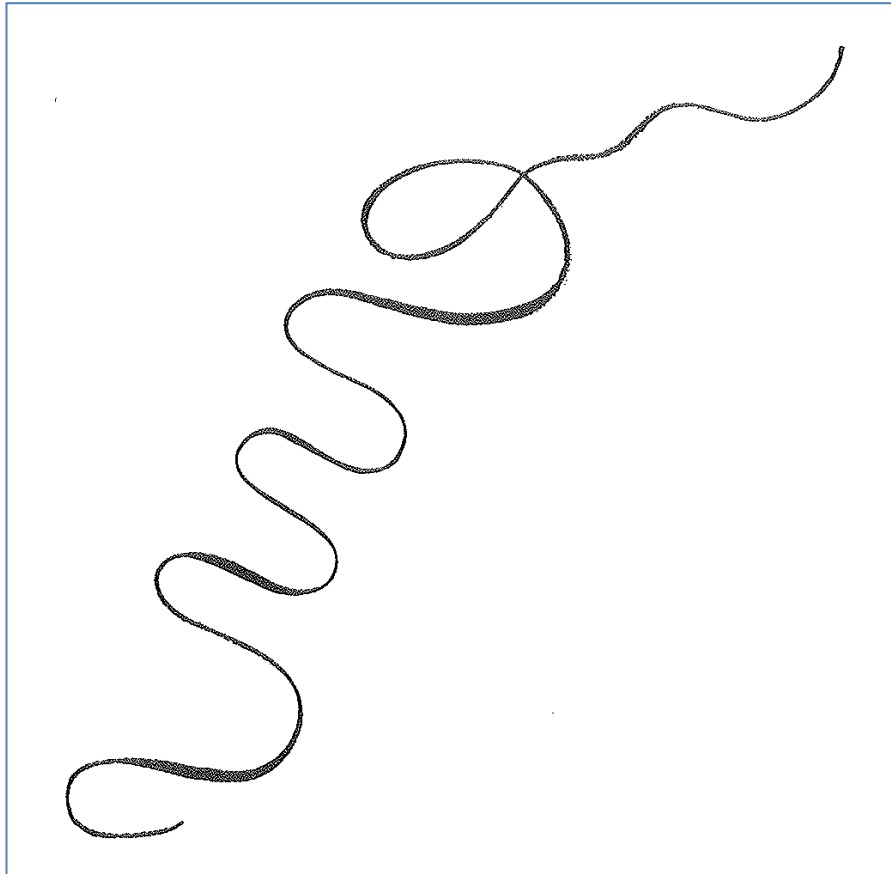


Figure 15. The line of the wayfarer (Sterne 1978).

Likewise, in the drawing reproduced as Figure 16, Ingold (2007, p. 82) maps a possible journeying sequence, showing the paths generated by wayfaring people as they “thread their way through the world”.

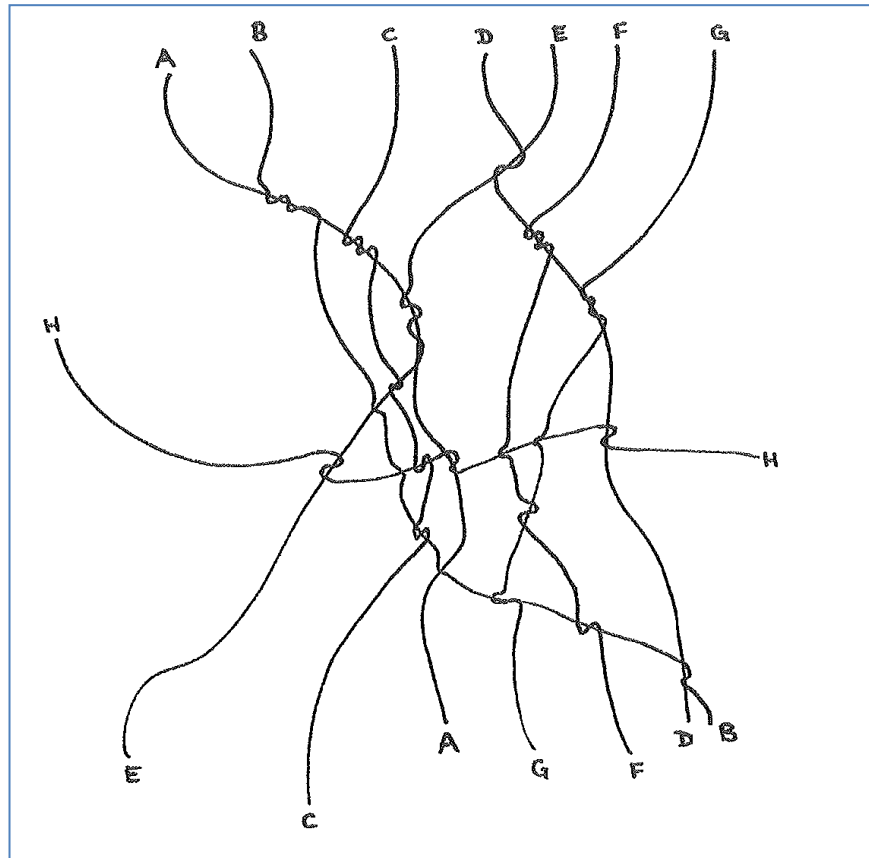


Figure 16. Landscape map of wayfaring peoples (Ingold 2007, p. 82).

In contrast to these nomadic and semi-nomadic traditional forms of movement, Wiebe (1989) draws a distinct contrast with the somewhat systematised and destination-oriented movements of the Royal Navy; moving from point A to point B in as direct a route as possible. Ingold refers to this mode of journeying as *transport*. Transporting is a destination oriented pursuit, journeying from A to B or point to point. In the case of transport, straight and economical journeys are desired, where it is not the journey *per se*, but rather the destination that is sought: “The ship, supplied for voyage before setting sail, was conceived by its naval commanders as a mobile vessel that would carry its crew across the seas on a course determined by the latitude and longitude of successive points *en route* to the intended destination” (Ingold 2007, p. 75).

Ingold uses the following drawing to convey the imaginary of that type of journey (see Figure 17). Again borrowing the line from Sterne (1978), Ingold modifies the gestural line to convey the now systematised approach to journeying. In short, “driven by imperial ambition, the Royal Navy sought to dispatch its ships towards destinations fixed within a global system of coordinates, sidelining traditional seafaring skills in favour of an instrumental calculus of point-to-point navigation. From the command perspective, the ship was seen not as an organ of seafaring but as a vehicle of transport” (Ingold 2007, p. 77).

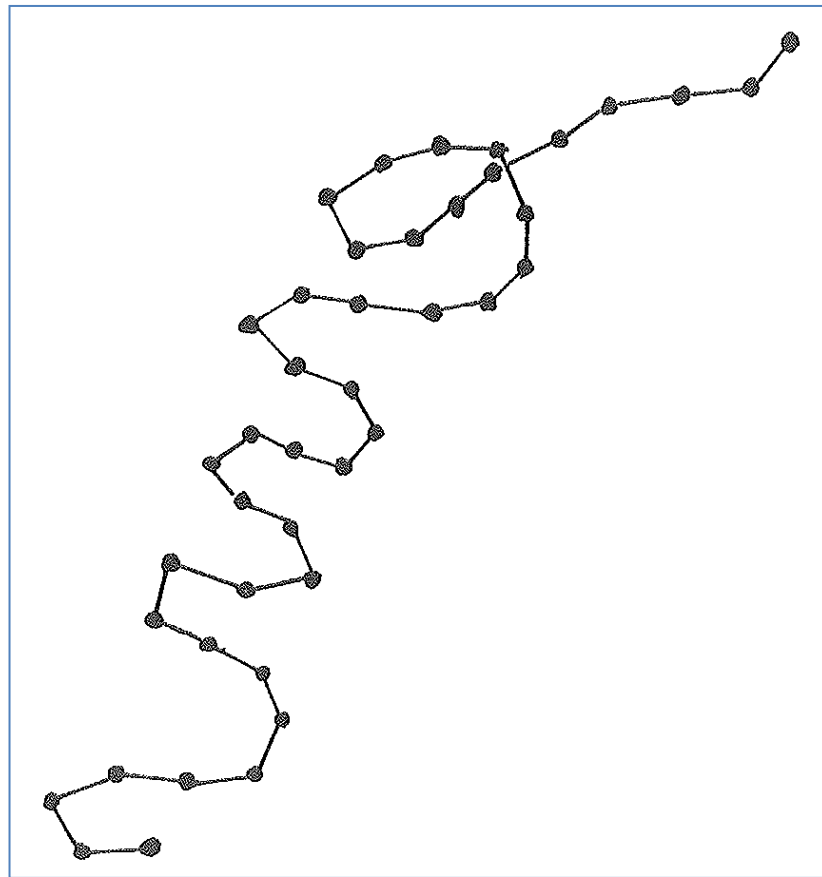


Figure 17. Points on the line (Ingold 2007, p. 74)

The line demonstrated here can be identified by “...connecting lines ... executed in a determinate sequence, the pattern they eventually form ... is already given at as a virtual object at the outset” (Ingold 2007, p. 74). Ingold adds: “Unlike paths formed through the practices of wayfaring, such lines are surveyed and built in advance of

the traffic that comes to pass up and down them. They are typically straight and regular, and intersect only at nodal points of power” (Ingold 2007, p. 81).

The free-flowing circuitous line shown in Figure 15 is now fractured by nodal points along its path (see Figure 17). The dance has become a march. Ingold (2007, pp. 74-75) states:

[o]nce the trace of a continuous gesture, the line has been fragmented – under the sway of modernity – into a succession of points or dots. This fragmentation ... has taken place in the related fields of *travel*, where wayfaring is replaced by destination-oriented transport, *mapping*, where the drawn sketch is replaced by the route-plan, and *textuality*, where storytelling is replaced by the pre-composed plot.

A possible scenario of a transport journey or journeys is conveyed in Figure 18.

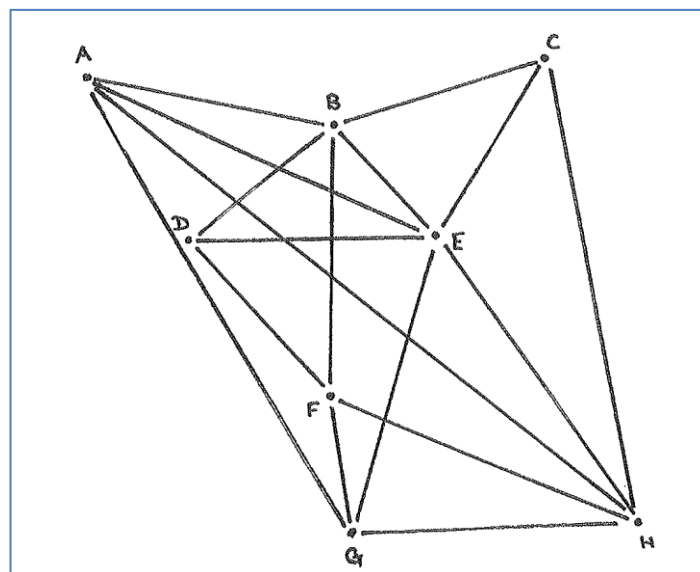


Figure 18. Landscape map of transport peoples (Ingold 2007, p. 82).

The re-imagination (and practise) of journeying has, according to Ingold (2007, p. 75), “transformed our understanding of place: once a knot tied from multiple and interlaced strands of movement and growth, it now figures as a node in a static

network of connectors”. What are the implications of such static, nodal connectors? What does this mean for the ways that people interact in today’s world? Lingis (1998, p. 166) offers a way through this debate by suggesting that people have wayfinding *moments* in their lives. The term he uses is “vital space”; those times where we glean, embody and respond to the places through which we move:

There extends about each of us our vital space, with its auspicious and inauspicious latitudes, its individual geography of passageways and horizons, its directions of ascent and descent. Its levels and paths delineate, in the midst of avenues and highways where the others circulate, the mountains and valleys in which nature distributes its species, and the cosmic vastness in which the ultra-things, the moon and stars, navigate, an itinerary for our own life (Lingis 1998, p. 165).

Aside from the suggestive mobility, it is apparent that Lingis refers to a journey, and more specifically, what Ingold refers to as a wayfaring journey, because he draws “vital space” from the Aboriginal Australian concept of ‘walkabout’:

In aboriginal Australia the girls are progressively given the skills of women; the boys are not educated or trained but initiated. The decisive stage is the ‘walkabout’; the youth leaves the camp alone for a year of wandering. He will learn by himself the terrain and the directions, the places and the ways to find water, the properties of the plants and the ways to catch and use the other animals, the dangers of exultations. He will find companions in the other animals, the stars and the spirits of the desert. When he returns it will be as an equal; he will know the equivalent of what the community has learned and shares (Lingis 1998, p. 166).

The practice of *walkabout* is an often mythologised, customary practice of mobility within Aboriginal Australia. Networks of movement revolve around land management practices, maintenance of kin relationships, religious ceremonies and

initiation (Peterson 2003). That said, however, Lingis (1998, p. 166) argues that some forms, perceptions or practices of journeying touch on the sentiment of the wayfaring journeys found in the walkabout:

Among us, in our sedentary empires, there is no initiation; at different stages of our lives we are transferred from post to post in the grids of the modern disciplinary archipelago – hospitals, schools, barracks, factory or office, prison or asylum, hospital, nursing home. We do not leave the common paths and workshops, stadiums and market-places; the outer deserts and outer space are mapped in advance. Yet we too sense the second space of our walkabout lying between the channels and the tracks and the assigned posts. The space of our own desert summons us out of our infancy cradled in the arms and placed in the space of others.

As individual people, moving, making everyday journeys, we sense the world in our own particular way:

In our vital space tasks to the measure of our forces, voluptuous fields and rhythms others do not see or hear, theatres of historical or cosmic dramas to which others are but spectators, make our body, trained, disciplined, and coded by others, a substance with sensibility and compulsions of its own ... It is a landscape sultry with voluptuous contours and dark places of intrigue and adventure, danger and security (Lingis 1998, p. 165).

Coming to know one's journey is, in part, coming to know both the world and one's self – and we each do that in our own way. In terms of everyday journeys, I would suggest that the process of gleaning is passive and neutral. It is what slips through the cracks of the mundane while the journeying body is unaware. The experiences that are actively processed are the *icons* of experience – the stand out moments: the car crash, the icy morning, the pinks and oranges of the post-volcanic sunset. Or, it might be the effect the journey has on the tired and comfortless body; the joyous



luxury of the heater or air-conditioning or the increased torque found in well designed cars performing on well cambered roads.

How does one bring experience, lines and journeying together? What is it that the line conveys? Ingold has come some way to explaining this relationship above, but for me, personally, a journeying exercise in drawing lines brought similar, but different responses.

In the first instance, I took my journey and photocopied it from a map. The result was a pink line (see Figure 19).

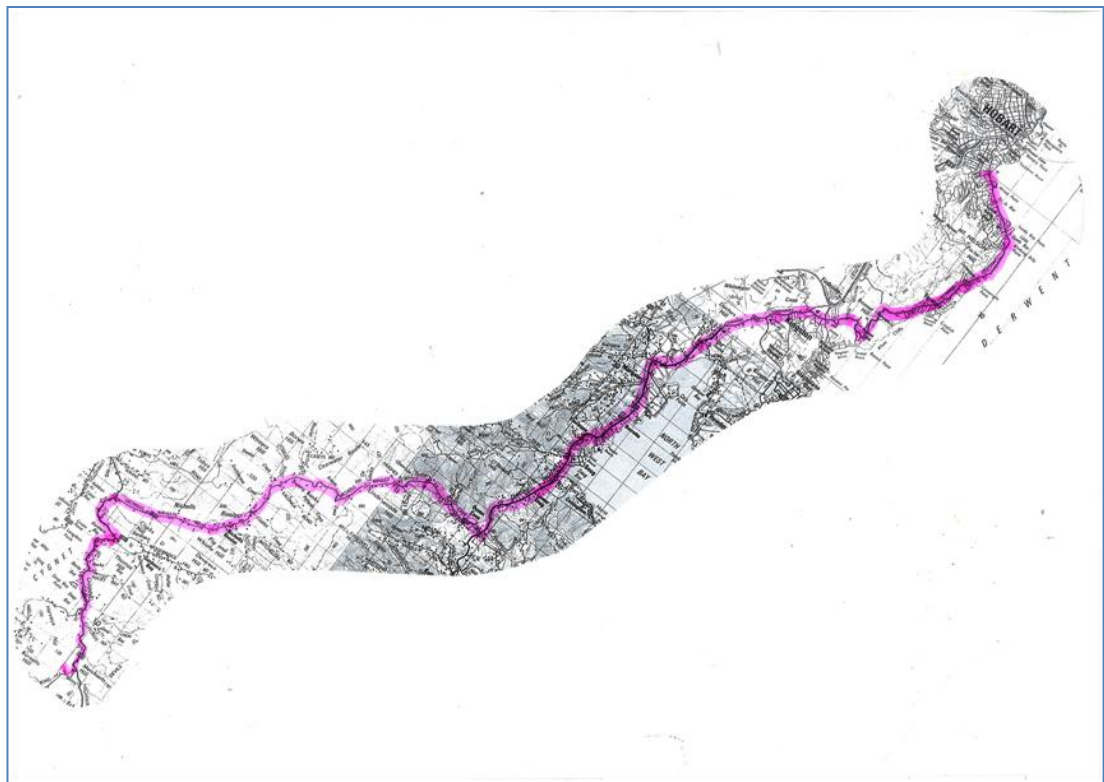


Figure 19. The journey as a pink line

As shown in Figure 20, I then traced my journey from the map onto plain paper. These two drawings, I suggest, are akin to Ingold's Figures 15-18 in that, while still playful, they seek to represent the journey from a transport perspective – in a literal way.

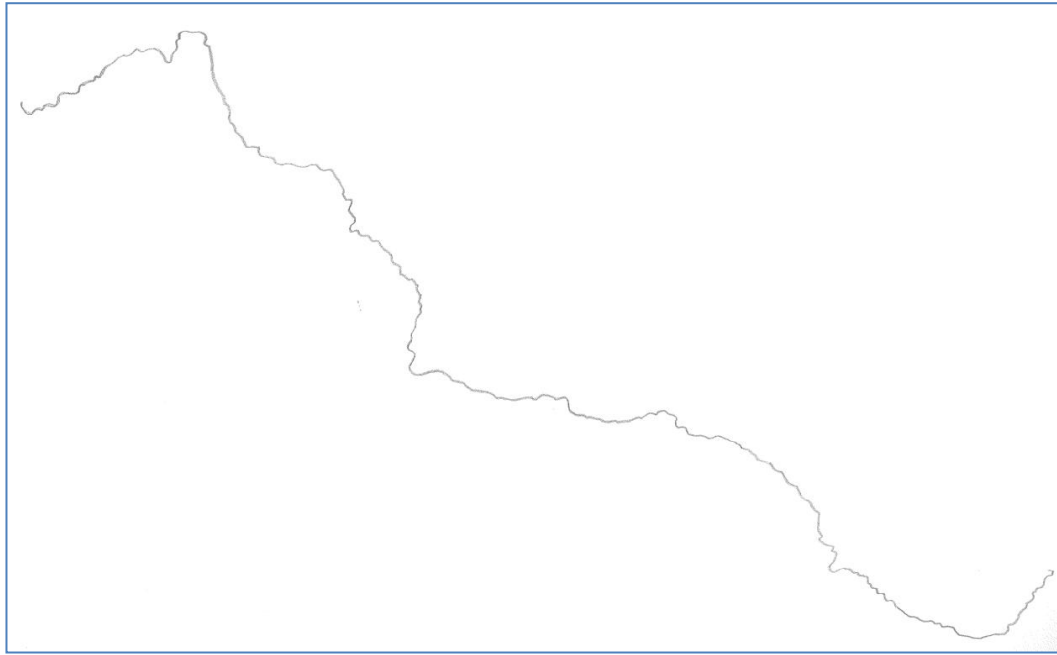


Figure 20. The journey as line (1)

As an exercise, each day for a month I drew over my traced line with coloured pencil. The resulting drawing is shown in Figure 21. Now the line is beginning to take on some of the characteristics of the journey and the layering found therein.

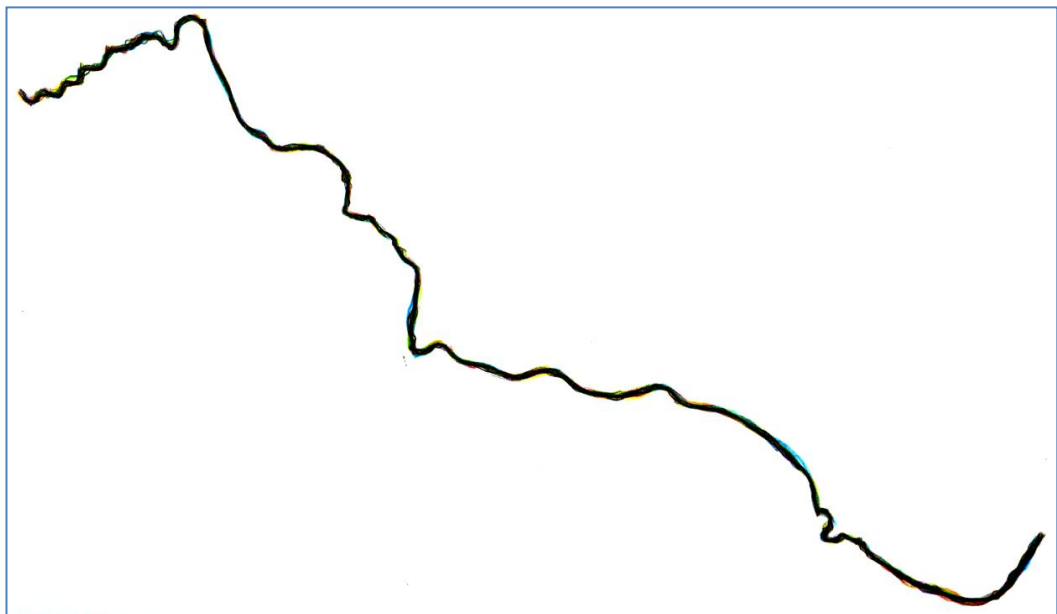


Figure 21. Daily drawing exercise, line over line.

From there I was able to draw my journey freehand (see Figure 22). And here we begin to see the line of the wayfarer found in Sterne's drawing shown above in Figure 15. This line contains the gesture of my journey, and while limited by the physical parameters of the phenomenally real road, the drawing carries a story of the fluidity of the passage; the motion and the sensibility of the line both drawn and driven. It is now that it becomes my line, my journey.

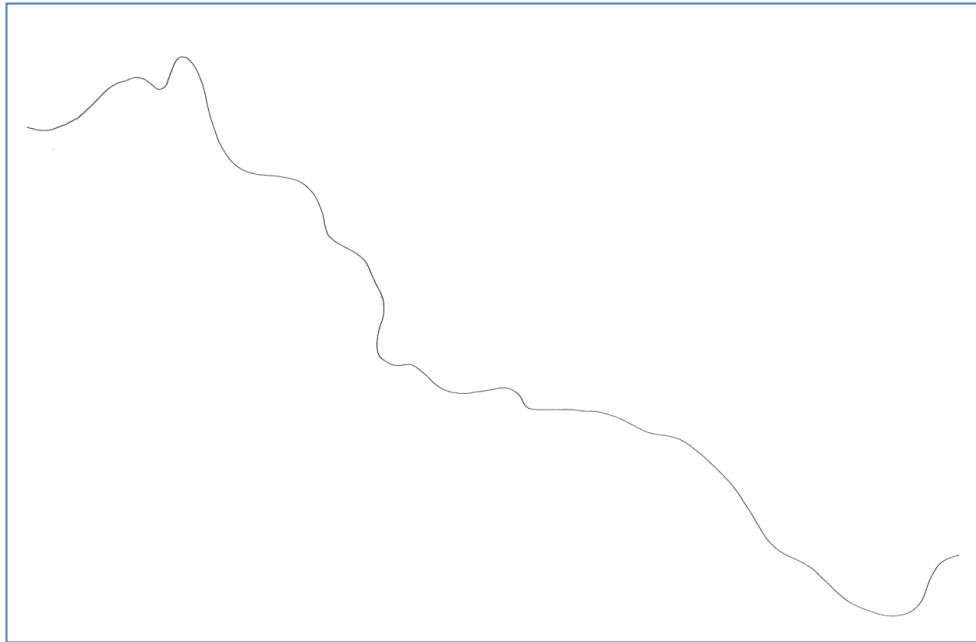


Figure 22. The journey as a freehand line (2)

In the final drawing, shown in Figure 23, I start to give the line texture and dimension; to play with its notion as a linear descriptor.

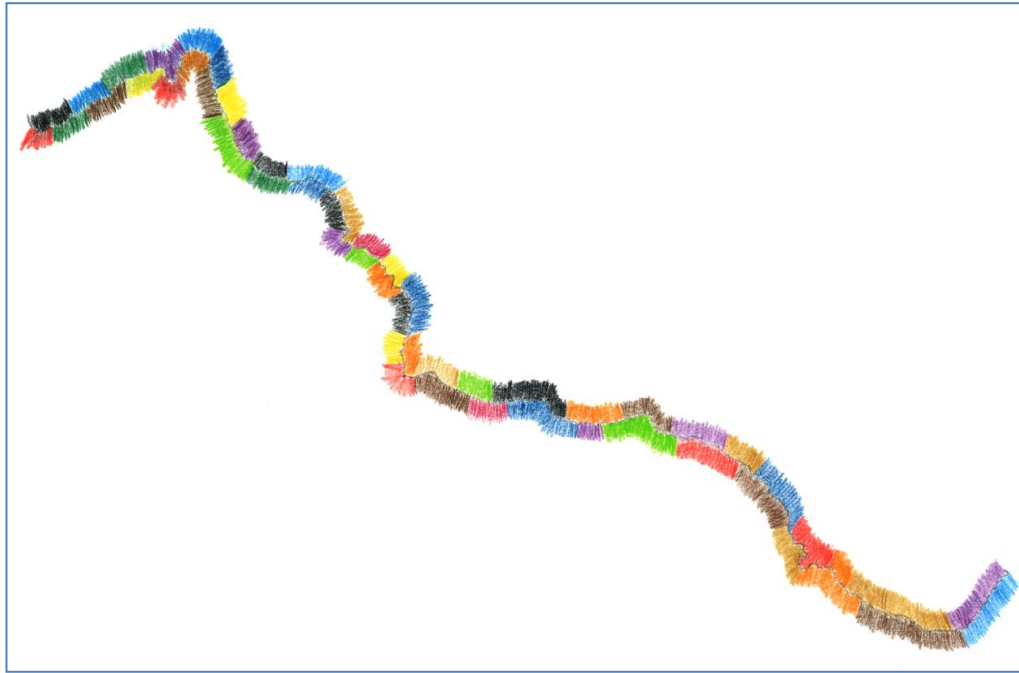


Figure 23. The shape of the line as imagined

These drawings sit on a spectrum somewhere between Ingold's drawings (shown above) and where I see betweenness. While playful, my drawings only hint at the possibilities for giving presence to betweenness. As Lingis (1998, p. 166) notes:

Our vital space is not plotted from the bird's-eye view, or from the view of the sedentary animal which fixes its dwelling and measures the environs in widening circles that keep the lair in view. It is a landscape where the rivers and the harbors [sic], the deserts and the cliffs and the passes are events not displayed in an array of dimensions and equivalent paths, but located only by the path we break as we go. The distances are not seen in a surveying gaze that encompasses, in simultaneity, the remote things present and exhibited; they are measured in a clairvoyance for what summons us. They are distances illuminated, on the glowing horizon ...

In conclusion, it becomes evident that the journey is more than A – B, but we already knew that. Journeying is not usually wayfaring, because we have roads and paths by

which we are guided, and responsibilities that shape modern life. Journeying one's most common journey, alone between two places, is an experience rich with potential for thought and reflection at every scale from the self to the scale of the Earth. In those wayfaring moments and vital spaces (even when on a highway, travelling at speed in a straight line) what is revealed of betweenness? And how might it be given presence? It is to these significant questions that we shall later turn.

## Interlude: An older kind of place

*It's the 27th April – about 6.30 pm, driving home from Hobart in the HK. I'm keen to get home, it's an autumn night, it's been raining and the roads are wet. I'm in the HK, she's a lovely old car but she's a bit hard to pull up if an animal jumps out in front. I am keen to get home too because the heater... you've got to twist the right button and do all the right things to get the heater to work. It takes one person to drive and the other person to make the adjustments. When it works, it works really well – but it is not working right now, so I am a bit cold. I've also got conjunctivitis, so my eye is aching. The air is freezing; I've got my polar fleece jacket and my hat on. I wish now I had grabbed that blanket I'd thought about bringing for my legs. I haven't eaten for ages, I'm pretty hungry.*

*The thing that stands out most on this particular stretch of road is its curviness and the thick bush – mostly eucalyptus and wattles, right up to the edges. It's really curvy and really bushy. It seems kind of old to me, this road – like a road that could have started out as a dirt road, and even been trodden down by horse and cart. It winds around the hills – there're no really steep sections. It's pretty narrow. That makes me think that it probably started as an Aboriginal track, that was widened by tree-fellers and redirected a bit to make use of the contours and to make way for horse-drawn carts and the new settlers. It feels like a road you could walk on – though you wouldn't risk it today I don't reckon – but it's got a tracky feel.*

*So – it's an old Aboriginal place, and, an old colonial place; you can sense it here more than in other places. Probably because you're driving and covering a lot of ground – getting a big sweeping sense of the place in a short time – so you can hold it all in your mind. It's a place that feels like the early days – Van Diemen's Land – like you can imagine the black fellahs and the white fellahs sorting it out together. I try not to think about the fighting, but I know that's there too. Lots of it looks like it could have been left alone for a long time. I can feel its emptiness.*

# Chapter 4: The creative realm

## **Introduction**

In this chapter I explain the terms *creative culture* and *creative field* as they are used in this thesis. In addition I delve into three examples of creative practice: poetry, dance and architecture. This chapter is developed as a transition from the review of literature in Chapter 3 to the empirically drawn work of Chapter 5. Like the review of literature in Chapter 3, this section seeks to provide textu(r)al material that will aid in the reader's drawing of the betweenness of place.

Creative production itself involves crossings-over; attempts to transcend the mundane by entering emotional and intellectual terrain that is unfamiliar and of unknown status – between what is known and what is yet to be known. In this chapter, we progress into the intricacies of creativity, as particular forms of practice. It is hoped that through revealing how those creative practices evolved and how they are given presence, that we will in turn give presence to betweenness. The key questions asked are: what does this creative practice do? And how does it come to be so? In seeking answers to these questions we will glean the signature attributes of creative practice and why they mean so much to people.

### **What do I mean by the term 'creative culture'?**

I use the term *creative culture* to describe a specific aspect of the ways in which creativity and culture interact. Bringing the two terms creative and culture together enables me to highlight a particular aspect of human culture that is not, usually, expressly conceptualised. It allows me to reconfigure a swirl of ideas concerning my key notion of betweenness. It will help to look at each term discreetly before bringing them together synergistically.

*Creativity* is a term with a broad and often contested history, and there is ongoing debate as to what creativity might actually be (see for example Ingold and Hallam 2007; Eger 2010; Gibson 2011; Glaveanu 2011; Girard *et al.* 2012; McIntyre 2012). Creative endeavour has been an evolving pursuit within Western culture through the ancient Greeks and the Renaissance to the present day, and may be considered primordial to both individual and collective human culture (Albert 1990). The word *creative* is associated with making and production, originating in the divine “[creation of the world](#)” (Williams 1983, p. 82). Until the nineteenth century creativity was associated with mysticism and thought to involve “[divine intervention](#)” (Sternberg 1999, p. 5). In its contemporary, everyday usage, *creativity* does not assume such a precise application, and is used in a variety of familiar contexts.

The difference between the traditionally mystical and the more secular conceptualisations can be elided by reference to the psychological realm. According to Smith, GJW (2008, p. 385), while Freud did not “[directly confront creativity as a psychological problem](#)”, certain acolytes made positive correlations between personality regression and “[the enigma of creation](#)” such that by “[regressing, the artist could get away from dependence on dominating conventions](#)”. However, these correlations resulted in problematic associations among personality, personality disorder and creativity: to create was to be somehow mad. Alternatively, Smith GJW (2008, p. 385) suggests that regression might best be seen as providing “[an enriched menu of alternative constructive possibilities](#)”.

Regression aside, certain personality traits are seen as more conducive to creativity than others. According to Feist (1999, p. 290) – in a list that could be challenged! – creative people in general tend to be “[open to new experiences, less conventional and less conscientious, more self-confident, self-accepting, driven, ambitious, dominant, hostile and impulsive...](#) Artists are more affective, emotionally unstable, as well as [less socialized and accepting of group norms...](#)”. At the very least, creative practice either attracts or requires those who have access to “[...synthetic, analytical, and practical aspects of intelligence: synthetic to come up with ideas, analytical to evaluate the quality of those ideas, and practical to formulate a way of effectively](#)



communicating those ideas and of persuading people of their value” (Sternberg and O'Hara 1999, p. 268).

Creativity has generally been thought to involve “both originality and effectiveness” (Runco and Jaeger 2012, p. 92); things created must be metaphorically or practically *useful* as well as *novel* in order to be considered genuinely creative. Bruner famously suggested that creativity required “effective surprise” (Bruner 1962, p. 3). That said, according to McIntyre (2012, p. 3) “creativity is not what most people think it is”; rather, it is dynamic in both its theoretical and colloquial understandings. Gibson (2011, p. 6) outlines the complex nature of the term, noting the “polysemic nature of ‘creativity’ and the multiple purposes to which creativity is put”. What is generally agreed is that creativity continues to be a foundational component of contemporary cultural life.

Williams (1983, p. 87) argues that culture is a process involving the “tending of something”, and its original application was to agricultural husbandry. The word *culture* derives from the word *cultivation* (Barnett 2009) and implies to *improve* and *grow*. Thus, “[w]hat emerges from the history of ‘culture’ is not a word that designates an ontological entity, but a complex noun of *process*... In short, culture [is] best thought of as *a process, not a thing*” (Barnett 2009, emphasis in original). Further to this, Ingold (2007) suggests that social and cultural life is *improvised*; that social and cultural life is worked out as people go along. Culture is implicit in the everyday meanderings of people through places. It becomes evident, then, that part of the *process* of culture involves the *practise* of creativity.

When the two concepts, *creativity* and *culture* come together in contemporary geography, it is usually in the field of economic geography (see for example Murphy *et al.* 2010). In economic geography, the combination of creativity and culture is popularly referred to as the creative industries (see for example Florida 2002; Johnson 2006; Gibson 2011). Thus, *creative industry* is a term that equates creativity with economic rather than social or cultural value; Florida (2002, p. ix; Florida 2005, p. 1) describes the broad and emerging range of people who are affiliated with

creativity in their economic activity as “the creative class”. As with other class divisions, the emphasis in this classification is on the economic characteristics that such a group manifests. The *creative class* has become a major factor within global economies, and it is similarly a major factor in the large scale of contemporary population migration. Thus, creativity is central to post-industrial capitalism and according to Ingold and Hallam (2007, p. 2) has come to be “seen as the key to commercial success”. Effective innovative creativity fans the fires of economic investment, encouraging economic growth and prosperity for both individuals and nation-states.

Creativity is linked to economic prosperity, then, because creativity is associated with innovation, intrinsic to the market’s restless search for the new. According to Ingold and Hallam (2007, p. 1): “In a global commodity market with an insatiable appetite for new things, where every aspect of life and art is convertible into an object of fascination or desire to be appropriated and consumed, creativity has come to be seen as a major driver of economic prosperity and social well-being”.

It comes as no surprise, then, to find that the overwhelming majority of contemporary literature regarding creativity is viewed from an economic vantage point (Ingold and Hallam 2007). But where does that leave art? Without wishing to detract from the entrepreneurial literature on creativity, this is not the focus of this investigation. Rather, I am concerned with non-economic dimensions of the ways in which culture and creativity intermingle. I term this intermingling *arts-based creative culture*.

‘Arts-based creative culture’ is a term derived from a subset of Florida’s ‘creative class’ industry, but I shift the focus away from the economic value of creativity to the *cultural* implications and capacities of creativity. In emphasizing the cultural function of creativity, I am acknowledging the element of *surprise* referred to by Bruner (1962), but also the more affective resonances that creativity implies. In this sense, it is a shift from *effective* to *affective* and what this may imply.

Daily immersion within arts-based creative culture is what artists, writers, poets, dancers, architects, musicians and composers – to varying degrees – *do*. To only a slightly lesser degree (perhaps), it is also the domain of others involved in arts-based creative culture. Such people might include gallerists, art collectors, historians, brokers and enthusiasts. Increasing one's exposure to and immersion within creative culture gives one greater breadth of understanding, but also a certain depth. Exposure to and immersion in creative cultural practice does not predicate a deep understanding of creative culture *per se*, but increased exposure does enhance one's opportunity to develop a multi-textual appreciation and a critical eye. To be exposed to arts-based creative culture is to increase one's *affective* capacity.

More specifically, I focus on *arts-based* creative culture, rather than, say, sporting or political cultures, though these may intertwine with arts-based creative culture – as artists create work that focuses on sport or is political in nature. The use of *creative culture* to which I refer emphasises the knock-on effects of creativity; it is the particular (if broad) cultural aspects of creative industries that carry a quietly affective resonance yet exercise a significant influence on the shape of the world.

### **What do I mean by the term 'creative field'?**

*Creative field* is used here to describe the variety of genres and media through which individual creative practitioners focus their creative practice. These media may, for example, be painting, sculpture, creative writing or musical composition. The term *creative*, as a standalone concept, has already been discussed in relation to *creative culture* (see pp.150-154). Here, therefore, I seek to explore the *creative field* as a conjoined unit that describes how a practitioner imagines their creativity and how, in turn, they come to be recognised and understood.

The creative field can be thought of as a lens through which practitioners focus their creative energies and talents. The term refers to the spatiality of a working situation, wherein creative practitioners develop their particular imaginative and disciplined practice. This exploration occurs both through and across specific creative platforms:

it is the realm in which they *work*. Psychological and spatial parameters configure a delicate relationship between possibilities and limitations. In such creative (dis)comfort zones practitioners are able to give presence to their material combinations and interpretations of the world within which they engage. The creative field is a reflection of the ontological and epistemological frames through which practitioners *guide* their personal creativity and professional practice.

To have a creative field is to interrogate a particular creative endeavour within which one may become proficient, eventually an expert; and, with appropriate exposure, become publically recognisable as a representative of that particular field. Working within a *field* ('I practice architecture' or 'I practice ceramics', for example) allows practitioners to hone their discipline-specific skills within a collectively understood medium. Practicing within a collectively understood creative field may assist practitioners to authenticate their individual creative presence. Within creative fields, proficiencies with a set (or several sets) of creative tools may be achieved. The ordered body, for example, is capable of using self to dance, or chain saw to sculpt. Other tools might be more cognitive in origin, like the ability to imagine either the possibility or the form of what has not yet been made material. It is through the practiced use of these tools within the imagined and material spatial frames of the *field* that creative energies may be harnessed and developed.

Knowing a creative field's boundaries, however, offers the potential for amalgamation and blending as new insights, definitions and categories are able to emerge. Sound art and photo-media art are examples of creative genres that, with advances in technology, have been newly generated. Occasionally creative practitioners may be proficient in more than one creative field, particularly when those fields share a close relationship. Interacting with the creative edge may occur through a variety of mechanisms. Cross-disciplinary artistic practice, collaborations and curated exhibitions, as well as contemporary interpretations of gallery or non-gallery spaces, are some of the ways that the creative cusp is illuminated. However, the primary form of interaction is through new works that embrace the lesser known facets of the contemporary world. New skins are formed and new edges imagined,

such that the future may be mapped as a series of torn membranes that are perpetuated around and through various imaginings of time-space(s).

Creative fields are thus the imagined spatial range of creative practitioners' daily worlds; their placement within a humanized and intellectual range. One's creative field is thus a platform, not dissimilar to a surface or a ground that provides the creative practitioner with the scope to perform creatively. Occupying the space at the creative edge allows one to *press* and interact with the spatial boundaries of the creative cusp.

I next focus on three specific creative fields, hoping that this will help draw out some aspects of *betweenness*. The fields represented are poetry, dance and architecture. Creating a journey through these three creative fields, I have condensed the narrative of each distinct practice, so that the reader may see in a glance – like driving through a town if you like – what the story of that creative practice is for me and, thus, what it is for betweenness. In addition, it is hoped that the reader will garner a line or some movement within their own drawing of betweenness of place.

## **The creative field of poetry**

### **Introduction**

The writing of poetry requires both a technical aptitude and an emotional awareness, and is thus shaped by the ability writers have to harness both the strength and range of their feelings and the technical and intellectual ability to synthesise those feelings into poetic discourse. As a discipline, poetry follows certain parameters that distinguish it from prose. Steinman (2008, p. 2) defines what the creative field of poetry might be:

... poems are generally pieces of language that position readers in certain ways, that indeed count on readers to expect and pay attention to often

condensed, carefully deployed, usually moving, language in which features we usually overlook – such as sound, line breaks, formal repetitions, connotations, even puns, and echoes of other people’s utterances in speech or writing – are meaningfully part of the effect of the language.

The writing that follows tracks a journey through the more pedestrian elements of poetry – from its historical roots and structural forms to several parameters of poetic aesthetics. In addition I suggest that there is something about poetry – something intangible and only haltingly described – that nonetheless gives light to the idea of betweenness.

### A genesis story

Poetry has a long oral history, predating literacy and evolving alongside and within the language of speech, drama and song (Tatarkiewicz 1975; Ford 2002). In its earliest history, story and folk song were combined, thus providing a mechanism by which stories and myths could be shared within communities, across political boundaries and between generations. To recite through song was an aid to memory when stories, fables and histories were long and convoluted. There was an act of mimicry involved, where players taught and copied each other with technical accuracy, thus facilitating the transfer of stories over time.

By the fifth century BC, song and poetry had become separated in some cultures, with poetry seen as a form of literature that sought to build meaning into texts in a way that could not be expressed as effectively in any other form. According to Ford (2002, p. 93), the term *poetry* came about when singers came to be described as “makers” or “poets” (*poiētai*) and the songs they were singing as “made things” or “poems” (*poiēmata*). In contrast to contemporary poetry, these early poems were

recited in epic narratives that often lasted many days<sup>48</sup>. Alongside ‘epic performances’ were audiences who had opinions about what was pleasing and what was painful, and early poetry was thus woven through with the “[instinctive reaction](#)” (Kennedy 1989, p. ix) of criticism<sup>49</sup>. With tastes for some forms over others perpetually shifting – and in tandem with the evolution of criticism and literary aesthetics more generally – poetry has continuously evolved, somehow resisting the grasp of those who have sought to establish a singular authoritative definition. Indeed, there may well be as many definitions as to what poetry might be as there are poems themselves (Graves 1965). The mechanism for these changes has come primarily through changes in the *form* of poems. As Graves (1965) suggests, the idea of poetry has been growing for many centuries as new poets find new meanings and extend the boundaries of poetic form. It is to the influence of form that I now turn.

## Poetic form

The form of a poem is its physical structure, which enables identification and classification within a specific genre of poetry. A poet makes choices, based on poetic experience, about the form within which a poem will be constructed. According to Steinman (2008, pp. 1-2), “... [most poems draw on at least one poetic tradition, even if to resist or change it. How else, after all, does someone know that what he or she is writing is a poem, if not from having read and been moved by poems and having entered into conversation with what he or she has read?](#)” The range of genres available to a poet today is extensive. Though many contemporary poets resist conforming to a specific genre in constructing their poetry, it is widely accepted in the discourse that extensive knowledge of a genre and its varying forms

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<sup>48</sup> Examples of the earliest epic poems include the *Epic of Gilgamesh* from Mesopotamia (roughly modern day Iraq); Homer’s *Iliad* (from Greece) and *Valmiki Ramayana* (from India).

<sup>49</sup> Aristotle’s *Poetics* marked the full arrival of literary criticism. In the *Poetics* Aristotle was able to map forms of literature and distinguish how those forms might achieve particular effects (Ford 2002).

is advantageous in the process of morphing, shifting, responding to or rebelling against the pre-defined parameters.

*Poetic form* references those familiar patterns (writing that does not go to the edge of the page) within which there are variations of stanza dimension, length of lines, and complex systems of rhyme and rhythm. Extensive variations in form include such examples as the sonnet, villanelle, ode, ballad, blank verse, haiku and acrostic, among many. Specific forms are more common in specific times and places, though adherence to strict poetic form has relaxed over time with new developments and inventions of new form. Various poetic effects are utilised within the form of a poem and include “tropes (such as metaphor and onomatopoeia); schemes (such as poetic epizeuxis) and verse effects (such as metrical variation)” (Pilkington 2000, p. 141)<sup>50</sup>.

This analysis of form and discipline explains, in part, the mechanistic structures that guide poetic development. Understanding poetic form is essential to the construction of poetry and certainly desirable in the appreciation of poetry. These disciplinary rules, evolving over time, are the tools of a poet – how a poet chooses to work, twist, bend, overlap and even resist them, forms part of the creative field of poetry. However, working with these disciplinary tools allows a poet to create something *more than*, something particular yet indescribable, something absorbed, intuited and felt. From my personal experience of poetry there is something significant, something that cuts deep to the heart of what it means to be human, in the communication, engagement and feeling that can be found in poetic verse. These mechanisms occupy a grey area between the technical aspects of form and the aesthetic perception of language, culture and humans more generally.

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<sup>50</sup> Metaphor: reference to one thing as symbolically another (“you are a red rose”); simile: where something is directly compared to something similar via use of *like* or *as* (“the wind is like ice this morning”); onomatopoeia: a word that replicates the sound of the thing designated (“spit, smooth”); epizeuxis: repetition of words in immediate succession (“yes, yes, yes, yes”).



## The aesthetics of words

Poetic development participates in an understanding of and appreciation for the aesthetics of words. The basic components – the building blocks of poems – are simple, unembellished, individual words. However, these units of speech and language – words – contain within their composition a beauty that can be traced to their etymological origins. The meaning of words, language itself, may well originate in the poetic. With very few exceptions, all words, traced back etymologically, arrive at a descriptor, either metaphor, simile or onomatopoeia – a picture contained in a word. Take, for example, the word hippopotamus – ““(h)ippopotamus’ is from the Greek *hippo* (‘horse’) and *potamos* (‘river’), hence ‘the river horse’” (Ciardi and Williams 1975, p. 105). Seen as the basic unit of language, the words represent and magnify a depth of historical meaning and history that resonates through poetic form.

As a discipline, poetry is well received when performed aloud – perhaps demonstrating its connection to an oral and aural heritage. The acoustics of words are an important aspect of the ways in which words are absorbed into consciousness. As a unit of speech, the word is produced by the human body. Its creation is made possible by the combination of tongue, teeth, facial muscle, saliva, roof of mouth, uvula, breath, larynx, chest muscles and lungs. Examples of poetic words that carry their meaning in their physiological expression are *spit*, *shut*, *smooth*, and *slime*. The word ‘spit’ is related to the quick and sibilant action of spitting; likewise the word smooth is almost tangibly smoo(oo)th. Thus, the body plays an important role in the generation of speech; through relationships between the meaning, sound and physiological performance of words, the self is able to glean an understanding of many words from their expressed sound (Ciardi and Williams 1975). That words sound to the ear in a manner that aids in their understanding partially explains why poetry has great affect and effect when read aloud: “In various ways poetry is more oral than prose. It has rhythmic patterns of sound. The essence of poetry is that it

must be sounded, either inside or outside the head” (Haldane 1970, p. 50). This acoustic and physiological effect may also be found in poetic prose<sup>51</sup>.

The *allure* of poetry, however, is something more, something indescribable. Recognising, acknowledging, using and adapting various combinations of techniques of which form, rhythm and etymology are part, leads to the generation of poetry. Yet, poetry is also something else again, something *more*. Poet Howard Nemerov reveals one possible place of origin of the indescribable, the site of its conception – the place where feelings of significance may begin to take form. Nemerov states that “[p]oetry works on the surface of the eye, that thin, unyielding wall of liquid between mind and world, where, somehow, mysteriously, the patterns formed by electrical storms assaulting the retina become things and the thought of things and the names of things and the relations supposed between things” (1978, p. 7). I suggest that it also commences on the surface of the skin, the hairs of the inner ear and the pit of the adrenal gland: the chemical that races the heart, stands hair on end, triggers emotion and generates dense internal feelings. Through these sensory receptors and physiological responses, poetry finds a space in which it may be conceived and developed in the mind of the writer, and through the process of listening and reading, go on to inscribe further meaning in the mind of the reader.

Poems facilitate the transfer of meaning and understanding in multiple ways. One such technique, which is a defining factor in poetry, is a sheer economy of words; their parsimonious placing allows combinations; their placement on the page, rhythm, sound and meaning resonate far beyond their power in isolation. This is not accidental. Part of the aesthetics of poetry is found in the rhythmic canter, the oscillation between words and spaces. The syllable also plays a part in the spacing or in sound and silence. The *beat* of poetry suggests that the origin of poetics stems ultimately from human physiology: “We bear the rhythms of poetry in our blood, constantly in motion with the heart’s beating” (Leggo 2008, p. 169). Among other things, the form of the poem “is the way one part of a poem (one movement) thrusts

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<sup>51</sup> See Lorimer (2008) for a discussion of this approach.

against another across a silence” (Ciardi and Williams 1975, p. xxii). The pauses found in poetry can be thought of as “like a rest in music... (t)he silences in poetry are not hard to identify” (Ciardi and Williams 1975, p. xxii). The power inherent in poetry as a field of practice occurs through evocative and moving combinations of words, and through the interaction between words and the *spaces between* those words. For bridges to connect there must first be a rift:

“Whatisculturehidinginthesilentspacesbetweenitswords?” (Olsson 1991, p. 16).

The metronomic motion of rhythm, often made palpable by reading aloud, is constructed through the placement of words in form. Through its rhythmic beating, the motion and feeling of the heart come together in a resonant set of patterns and feelings that begin to unveil the means through which poetry *is* and *does* – the epicentre of emotional affect.

In contrast to the definition of poetry noted above by Steinman (2008, p. 2) Archibald MacLeish (1962, pp. 50-51) offers a poetic definition:

## **Ars Poetica**

A poem should be palpable and mute  
As a globed fruit,

Dumb  
As old medallions to the thumb,

Silent as the sleeve-worn stone  
Of casement ledges where the moss has grown --

A poem should be wordless  
As the flight of birds.

\*

A poem should be motionless in time  
As the moon climbs,

Leaving, as the moon releases  
Twig by twig the night-entangled trees,

Leaving, as the moon behind the winter leaves,  
Memory by memory the mind --

A poem should be motionless in time  
As the moon climbs.

\*

A poem should be equal to  
Not true.

For all the history of grief  
An empty doorway and a maple leaf.

For love  
The leaning grasses and two lights above the sea --

A poem should not mean  
But be.

While it is all very well to outline how it is that one comes to speak poetry, it is another to guide one into the realm of intelligent feeling that poetry represents. Reading and hearing poetry that resonates for the reader or listener is the key to a portal; a means to access something that dissolves when described. This indefinable quality means that the potency of poetry must be alluded to rather than rationally quantified. As Ciardi and Williams (1975, p. xxi) observe, “[t]he words, images, rhythms, forms, and dramatic situations of good poems are haloed by ghosts, and the ability to release them is perhaps the basic source of poetic power”. And further, “nothing will direct a reader to the experience of a poem until he sees that *the ghosts of a poem talk to one another*” (Ciardi and Williams 1975, p. xxi).

The creative field of poetry comprises the manner in which, within a specific range of thinking and writing, poets imagine the scope of their writing practice. In turn, writing practice is a reflection of the poet’s specific and individual way of knowing – or getting to know, making and responding to – the world. To be a poet is to imagine *being a poet* and this involves identifying oneself within an imagined, discipline-specific spatial, intellectual and professional range – in this case, poetics. The scope of one’s writing practice is a reflection of the relationship one has with poetry. Steinman (2008) suggests that the process of writing poetry is intimately linked to and relies upon reading and being *moved* by both individual poems and the spectrum of poetic forms<sup>52</sup>. In this way poets and poems enter into conversations with other poets and poems<sup>53</sup> and poets come to recognise that they have indeed written poems.

In its raw or polished form, challenging or continuing ancient traditions, in its very presence poetry provides access to an imaginary spatial vantage point. It is from this vantage point, within the realm of the “*strange interface between fact and meaning*”

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<sup>52</sup> That is not to say that every poem has the capacity to *move* a reader – nor will the same poem *move* all or many individuals.

<sup>53</sup> Steinman (2008) refers to this as intertextuality, a notion that suggests that particular poems may speak to each other.

(Nemerov 1978, p. 7), that new worlds are written into being. Poetry is always shifting in its evolving compendia of possible forms: the world in which it is situated and the circumstances of its readers and audience. The task of poetry, however, remains the same: it is to capture something of life and its felt embodiment – something that resists capture – that, chameleon-like, shadow-like, requires particular skill to recognise and configure as words. It is this phenomenon that edges us closer to the realm of betweenness. When those new worlds, written into being by poets, bleed into – visceral like – the minds and bodies of the reader, those minds and bodies change; the reader absorbs and makes of it what they will and it will affect them in ways that cannot be predict.

## The creative field of dance

### Introduction

The creative field of dance comprises the manner in which dancing bodies imagine the style, scope and range of their dancing practice<sup>54</sup>. To dance professionally relies on a broad spectrum of recognisable techniques and practices that constitute a proficient and qualified approach to movement. To *dance* is to portray certain parameters that distinguish it from basic, everyday movement and, as a result, may be either improvised, choreographed or a combination of the two<sup>55</sup>. The definition of dance offered by Kealiinohomoku (1983, p. 541) is a “transient mode of expression, performed in a given form and style by the human body in moving space. Dance occurs through purposefully selected and controlled rhythmic movements; the resulting phenomenon is recognized as dance both by the performer and the

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<sup>54</sup> For the purposes of this discussion I will focus on the professional realm of contemporary dance rather than social and recreational dance practice.

<sup>55</sup> Dance is rhythmical movement, but it is not, for example, sawing a log or marching in a parade (Noverre 1983).

observing members of a given group”. In its most basic form, dance may be characterised by the notion of *intention* – such movement must be able to be *read* as dance (McCormack 2008).

The *field* of dance is different to the concept of dance considered in and of itself. As a creative *field*, dance incorporates an individual’s perception of their own dance parameters and choices and thus has greater depth as an idea. The creative field of dance is the collective platform upon which individual dancers may imagine, embody and ground their own and others’ dancing practice. Given that dancing can be *read* as dance, dancers change and grow, evolving their personal understanding of what dance might be.

Given this, the above definition by Kealiinohomoku (1983, p. 541) while accurate as far as it goes, is not entirely comprehensive. On one hand the definition describes the essential characteristics of *dance* as a discipline; on the other hand, however, it does not incorporate the imagined and imaginable sphere of the dancing dancer, and, thus, it remains deficient. The imagined parameters of the dancing field respond to the relationship between the actual dancing body, the desired dancing body and performative skills. The creative field of dance is, thus, a reflection of the broader life choices made in order to become and be a dancer as well as the day-to-day choices of (dancing) action. The creative field of dance incorporates dance specifically but is simultaneously more than dance strictly defined – it incorporates the breadth of a dancer’s creative practice; it is their dancerly imaginary.

In the discussion below, I will explore the nature of dance, moving from its historical roots and diverse styles through to the ways in which dance and betweenness are related.

### A genesis story

The earliest forms of dance can be found “deep in our primate heritage” (Francis 1991, p. 204). According to Francis (1991, p. 210), “purposeful, intentionally

rhythmical ... patterned, nonverbal body movements that are other than ordinary in nature” form one end of a dance continuum, where a dance progression can be said to evolve through time toward the “increased behavioural, cognitive, and cultural complexity that characterises human primates”. Based on studies with modern day apes, it is thought that human beings began dancing for a number of reasons, though primarily as a form of energy release; as a mating activity and ritual; for play; as a form of communication; and for the maintenance of social groups (Francis 1991). The evidence of cave paintings suggests that early *Homo sapiens* developed a capacity to use movement symbolically, and may even have danced to protect themselves from unseen forces – what we would now consider magical purposes.

The evolution of dance through time developed geographically and culturally as humans responded physically and emotionally to their surrounding place. Dance is less a human invention than an evolved phenomenon occurring in response to interactions between people and their surrounding places. Indeed, as Layson (1994, p. 5) suggests, the study of dance history reveals that dance is a “highly complex human activity ... serving many purposes and developing a multiplicity of types which proliferate, prosper, decline and otherwise change through time”. Given these evolutionary origins, the creative field of dance incorporates creative, aesthetic and intellectual parameters. These parameters may involve imagination, design, performance, appreciation and memory. Such a range of parameters is testimony to the physical capabilities and creative intelligence of the responsive and interpretive dancing body and the human form more generally.

The ideas of the dance are presented by the dancing body and may be both explicit and nuanced. Indeed, the history of dance may have been intricately involved in modes of storytelling. In experiencing dance, one is entranced by the beauty, physical aptitude, emotion and vigour of the performance. One is able to sense the spirit of the dance and the meaning contained within the ideas underpinning it. In turn, the meanings and the creative and aesthetic parameters are interwoven with personal interpretation. To describe one’s experience of the world while dancing is to embody the story and to express and convey feeling and emotion through movement



– often leading to charged performances. The stories of dance, then, are intimately related to the stories within dance – as humans and dance, dance together through time.

## Drawing dance

Dance has been described as the *ephemeral art* (Jowitt 1977; Thrift 2000; Morris 2005; Homans 2006; Butterworth and Wildschut 2009). The transfer of particular dances from generation to generation, from body to body, has relied upon description, mimicry and repetition to enable production, re-production and evolution. It has relied upon the spoken word and enactment to pass choreographed routines from one body, one performance, to the next. In the absence of a recording mechanism, many dances were carefully plotted and performed, only to simply disappear (Homans 2006). McCormack (2008, p. 1825) argues that “... the very act of dancing seems to evade attempts to set it down on paper”. As a dancer moves within the space of the dance floor, it is as though it is inscribing its own erasure. As McCormack (2008, p. 1825) suggests, dance may be defined “by the ongoing inventive enactment of its own impermanence and disappearance”. The mobile moment of the dancer is like an invisible pen, leaving no trace of its having been there.

That said, the act of storytelling may be responsible for the sustained evolution and, thus, the ongoing presence of many dances. The story may remain intact, but its method of deliverance may shift with each performance or production (Hall 1983). This shift may be termed the *changing same* (Ryan 1981; Gilroy 1991) as the dance slowly evolves from performance to performance<sup>56</sup>.

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<sup>56</sup> The term *changing same* refers to “an understanding that a continuum exists but there is a potential for dislocation through intensification or dilution and a process of co-option or amalgamation by dominant or ascendant discourses as they are moved through specific feedback loops...” (Haw 2011, p. 572).

Prior to the development of video recording technologies, there arose a desire to record dance in a way that allowed individual compositions to be reconstructed without requiring direct tuition and transfer from dancer to dancer. According to Guest (2005, p. 1), “for at least five centuries attempts have been made to devise a system of movement notation”. Several movement notation systems were developed throughout history, though all eventually fell into disuse. In part this was due to the inadequacy of the notational system, though also because dance was undergoing rapid shifts in form and each corresponding notational system became outmoded. The notational system for dance came much later than that for music. According to Hall (1983, p. 395), “[t]he problem which baffled the inventors of systems of dance notation, century after century, was that they had to record something far more complex than music or speech: they had to set down in two dimensions, on paper, the movements of all parts of the body in three dimensions of space and one of time”. A dancing body moves through space as well as time, and along with the body’s capacity for such a wide variety of movements dance notation took much longer to develop (Guest 2005).

The most influential notational system, known as *Labanotation*, was devised by Rudolf Laban. Laban’s system of drawing dance enabled the documentation, reconstruction and, thus, preservation of techniques and stories while also assisting in the design of new performances (Franko 2011). As a mode of inscription, Labanotation serves to record an array of physical movements and the spatial parameters of the dance. According to Guest (2005, p. 3), “The system which can record objectively the changes in the angle of the limbs, the paths in space, the flow of energy, the movement motivation and, equally importantly, the subtle expression and quality, deserves special attention. Labanotation is such a system”. Figure 24 demonstrates the visual complexity of Labanotation. Using an extensive array of symbols, all facets of the moving body can be represented, including positions of the feet, aerial steps, turns, arm and leg gestures, space measurement, floor patterns and paths, touch and slide for the legs and arms, parts of the limbs, parts of the torso,

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tilting, turning of the limbs, rotation of the head, specific flexion and extension (including contracting and bending), the relationship of various parts, repeat and analogy signs, scoring, support for various parts of the body, equilibrium and balance, variations in positions, paths and steps, manner of performing gestures, dynamics and alternate versions (Guest 2005)<sup>57</sup>. Such a comprehensive set of instruction must make the revival of previously notated dance an art form in itself.

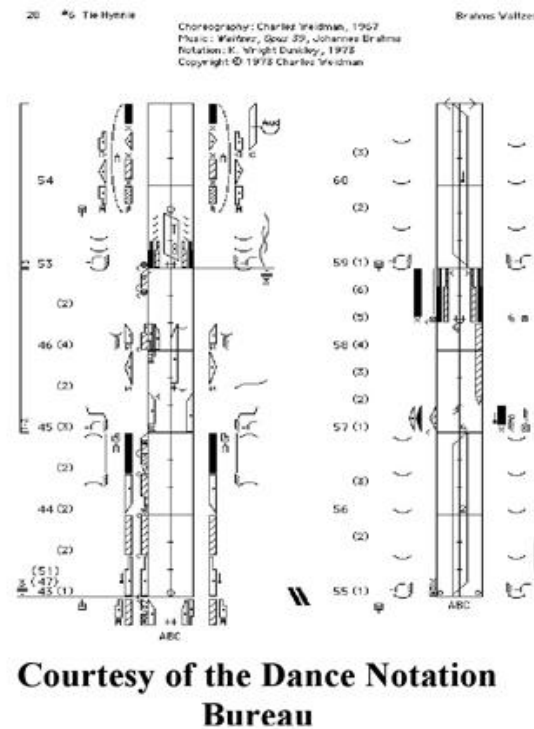


Figure 24. Dance notation (Desaulniers 2010)

While dance notation was a revolutionary development in process, systems of notation were widely criticised and many dancers maintained a mistrust of visual archiving (Franko 2011). And even with the advent of film technology, much dance was communicated through oral means. However, dance notation provides a mechanism for perceiving the elements of dance notation without actually speaking

<sup>57</sup> This list was modified and drawn from the 'Table of Contents'.

or writing such notation<sup>58</sup>. Certain logic pertains to dance notation that is readable to the respondent. According to Franko (2011, p. 324):

[t]he sense of the floor as square and the typical symmetry of the patterns is easily encompassed by the page or the open book. These spatial relationships – the relations of the dance floor and the danced patterns upon it to notational script and the page – underlie the sense that baroque dance existed largely in relation to the conditions of possibility of its own notation.

The movement of the dancer on, around, through and across the spatial plane of the floor gives shape to the spaces that may be *touched* by the dancer; though not only *touched* – spaces are ripe for pushing, weaving, slicing, jabbing, enclosing, splaying and drawing. The space of the performance – visual, acoustic, tactile, olfactory, temperate – may be accessed in a manner that is facilitated (and thus also constrained) by the imagination of the choreographer and dancer and the physical parameters of the body.

These spatial enactments are sensorily absorbed by those witnessing and responding to dance. The process of absorption is, in part, a form of cognitive mapping that “takes the place of the idea of notation and takes root in the dancer’s mind and body (if not on paper)” (Franko 2011, p. 328). Movement of the dancing body, as it is interpreted by the absorptive witness, means that the dancing body is not innocent. According to McCormack (2008, p. 1822), “... bodies move in more ways than one (spatiotemporally, kinaesthetically, affectively, collectively, politically and imaginatively) and ... this movement is potentially generative of different kinds of spaces”. Through dance, people are able to move in ways that give presence to their

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<sup>58</sup> According to Heather Desaulniers (2010), a freelance dance writer and critic, the use of dance notation is in decline. The funding required to sustain such systems is not available. She argues that a “thoughtful, reliable, and collaborative archival practice integrating technology, notation and personal resources to the fullest potential” is required to keep dance notation alive.

individual and collective political voice – both professional and recreational dancing bodies, can “‘produce’ or generate spaces” (McCormack 2008, p. 1822).

The advent of notation has led to the suggestion that dance may be *read* and perhaps this is to some extent the case; that there is an element of readerly decoding that goes on for the respondent. Franko (2011, p. 324) suggests that the “page itself becomes the floor one traverses in dancing, obliging the decoder to read not only in a linear but also in a diagrammatic manner” – that, through reading, one is simultaneously drawing and diagramming as part of the responsive architecture of dance notation. The mental mapping that occurs is cumulative: all aspects of sensorial systems are incorporated and then shift, morph and mutate, leaving diagrams, maps, memories and traces of this essentially ephemeral art form.

A choreographed dance may be thus written and read outside of notational systems. Rather than being written and read on paper, it may be written and read in one’s mind, each movement recorded as a trace, a line, a dot and a smudge as dancing becomes drawing:

You can establish a line with a gesture... I can establish a line with a crumbling gesture. I can establish a line on the floor with little hops. I can establish it by rubbing it into the floor... by making little tiny dots, or between two dots... I could probably smear it, slide it, tap it, swat it, kick it. A line or a point is there in space and how you manifest it is really up to you. It is very important that this part of the process remain extremely playful and extremely imaginative. Don’t restrict yourself to strict drawing of lines like you’re drawing with a knife or a pen for that matter. You have to use the surface of your body and your imagination about how lines could form and how you could manifest those things with your body (Forsythe 1999).

The process of absorption to which I refer is multi-sensorial and not limited to cognitive capacity. In responding to dance performance, one *feels* a dance viscerally

– it is *in* and *of* the gut, and one may hear, smell, sense and empathise with the dancer in a shared emotion, a shared humility of the body's physical capacity and, thus, a shared humanity. The movement of the dancer is carried as a trace in one's mind, an ephemeral moment mapped only as it is perceived by the witness. This trace brings us again a little closer to betweenness in that the trace is the line the dancer danced and thus the weaving of bodies and memories. The trace of the dance that lingers in the mind of the viewer – like the light left behind from a sparkler – is a blend of colour, pattern and sound. But it is also the sense of weight as the dancer's body lands on the floor and sends vibration into the space; it is the seeming weightlessness as the dancer makes physical connection with the less commonly occupied spaces above the surface underneath, ground or floor. It is the grace with which those spaces are touched. It is the space between what the dancer does and what the viewer might one day, or may never, do. It is the human capacity to move that is extended to its limits – the sheer possibility of the moving body. But it is also the story of the dance.

Dancing brings something significant to both the viewing and the dancing body. For the dancer it is vitality; here betweenness arrives as a slow accretion of rhythms and flows. Where betweenness may be experienced in quick revelatory moments, in the case of dance, betweenness comes as a creep in one's visceral register.

The type of movement performed is a register of the story or thematic device of the dance. A mixture of empathy and wonder is embedded within the line of movement. That line is that carries through to the audience, it is what they take away from the ephemeral dance experience. It is this that the audience borrows when moving themselves through their own everyday spaces. The composition is a crafted device, it is designed and thus it has meaning. The line of the dance, the trace of the dancer's movement is what conveys that meaning and it is what is left after the dance has ended. Though ephemeral in performance, the dance lingers and is interpreted by the audience in multiple and incommunicable ways.

# The creative field of architecture

## Introduction

The creative field of architecture comprises the manner in which the architect imagines their professional realm as an architect. In its most pared back form, architecture is the “art or practice of designing and constructing buildings” (OED 2010). For Cuff (1992, p. 4), however, the role of the architect requires more nuanced description in that “... architectural practice emerges through complex interactions among interested parties, from which the documents for a future building emerge”. According to Rasmussen (2000, p. 9), architecture is “... a functional art. It solves practical problems. It creates tools or implements for human beings and utility plays a decisive role in judging it”. Architecture might, then, be considered the “art of organization” (Rasmussen 2000, p. 14). According to the Roman architect Marcus Vitruvius (1960), writing in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (80 - 15 BC), an architect requires a propensity for and openness to learning such skills as drawing, mathematics, history, philosophy, music, medicine, legal systems, and astronomy. While that list is already substantial, in the current era I would add to an architect’s kit bag such awareness as is to be found in geography, geology, engineering and meteorology.

Designing spaces involves the highly variable yet specialist skill of working collaboratively with other architects, with different tiers of government, and with builders, contractors and suppliers. Most profoundly, however, architecture involves the input and aspirations of the client for whom the building is being designed and built. Clients, aside from providing the site, also provide the brief – and this can vary from slight to major input. Adventurous or trusting clients give an architect the space to extend their design expression – the more trusting and adventurous, the more expressive the design may be. It is for this reason that the private homes of architects themselves are often the most expressive deeper philosophies of architecture, aesthetics and life more broadly.

In its encapsulation of space, architecture is a major factor in shaping the way spaces are enacted, right down to the ways in which everyday dwelling tasks are performed. The shape of the spaces in which people live their lives both directly and indirectly informs how they approach the world; it is for these reasons that architects carry a profound responsibility. In the following discussion, I will investigate the nature of architecture as core practise in the development of human culture explicating relationships between architecture and betweenness.

## Genesis story

Humans, in all cultures, make shelters (Brown 1991). Not having feathers, wool or fur, and only a modicum of thin, short, body hair, humans need to shelter from the elements in order to survive extremes of climate and to gain protection from predation during the vulnerable hours of darkness and sleep. In addition, the use of shelter helps minimise insect bites and assists in the maintenance of body warmth<sup>59</sup> (Stewart, FA 2011), all of which contribute to more effective sleep – and, in turn, an increase in thinking capacity (Coolidge and Wynn 2006).

According to Vitruvius (1960, p. 38), the earliest origins of shelter construction lay in the use and development of fire. “The men [sic] of old”, he states “were born like wild beasts, in woods, caves and groves, and lived on savage fare”. The natural occurrence of lightning strikes, volcanic eruption and even occasional spontaneous combustion led to grass and bushfires (Pratt and Gwynne 1977) in which “the inhabitants of the place ... were put to flight, being terrified of the furious flame” (Vitruvius 1960, p. 38). After the fire subsided, however, the inhabitants “drew near ... observing that they were very comfortable standing before the warm fire”. In turn “they put on logs and, while thus keeping it alive, brought up other people to it,

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<sup>59</sup> Fiona Stewart (2011) spent 11 nights sleeping in chimpanzee nests, some in the canopy of trees, some on bare ground, to test the relative advantages of sleeping in nests in trees



showing them by signs how much comfort they got from it” (Vitruvius 1960, p. 38). Through this type of communality – standing or sitting still, in relative comfort, and in communion with fellow human beings – the earliest stages of *conversation* may be found. According to Vitruvius (1960, p. 38) it was, thus, “the discovery of fire that originally gave rise to the coming together of men, to deliberative assembly and to social intercourse”. Figure 25 depicts the sociability of fire.

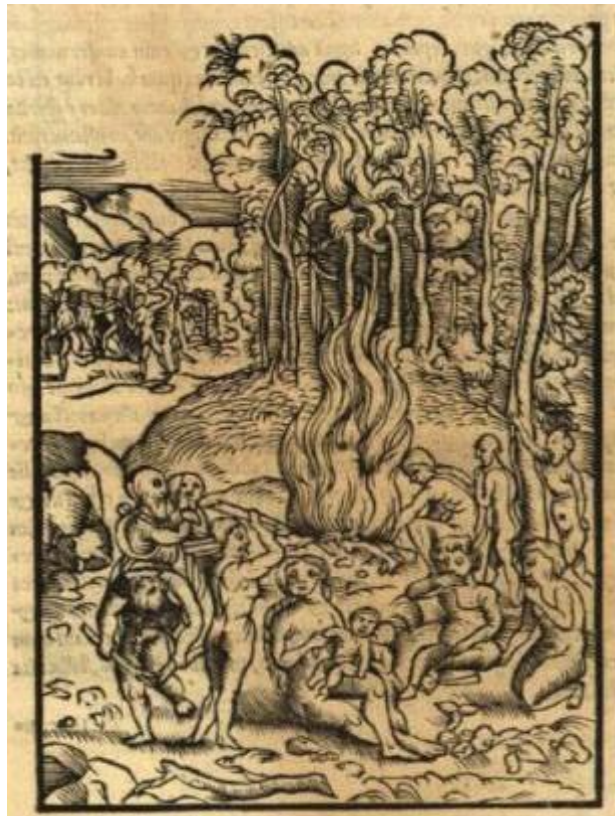


Figure 25. “The invention of fire, after Fra Giocondo” (Rykwert 1981, p. 115).

From these communions, humans, with upright bodies and limber hands, began to construct shelters: “Some made them out of green boughs, others dug caves on the mountain sides, and some, in imitation of the nests of swallows and the way they built, made places of refuge out of mud and twigs” (Vitruvius 1960, p. 38). Figure 26 demonstrates what one variation of the first hut may have looked like.



Figure 26. “‘The first building,’ after Viollet-le-Duc” (Rykwert 1981, p. 39).

“Next, by observing the shelters of others and adding new details to their own inceptions, they constructed better and better kinds of huts as time went on”

(Vitruvius 1960, pp. 38-39). Figure 27 demonstrates a possible path of hut evolution. Whether for the purpose of worship, civic responsibilities or simple shelter, the process of building, improvising and improving went on for hundreds of thousands of years. Sharing knowledge and working together, communities, villages, townships and eventually cities evolved over time and around the world.

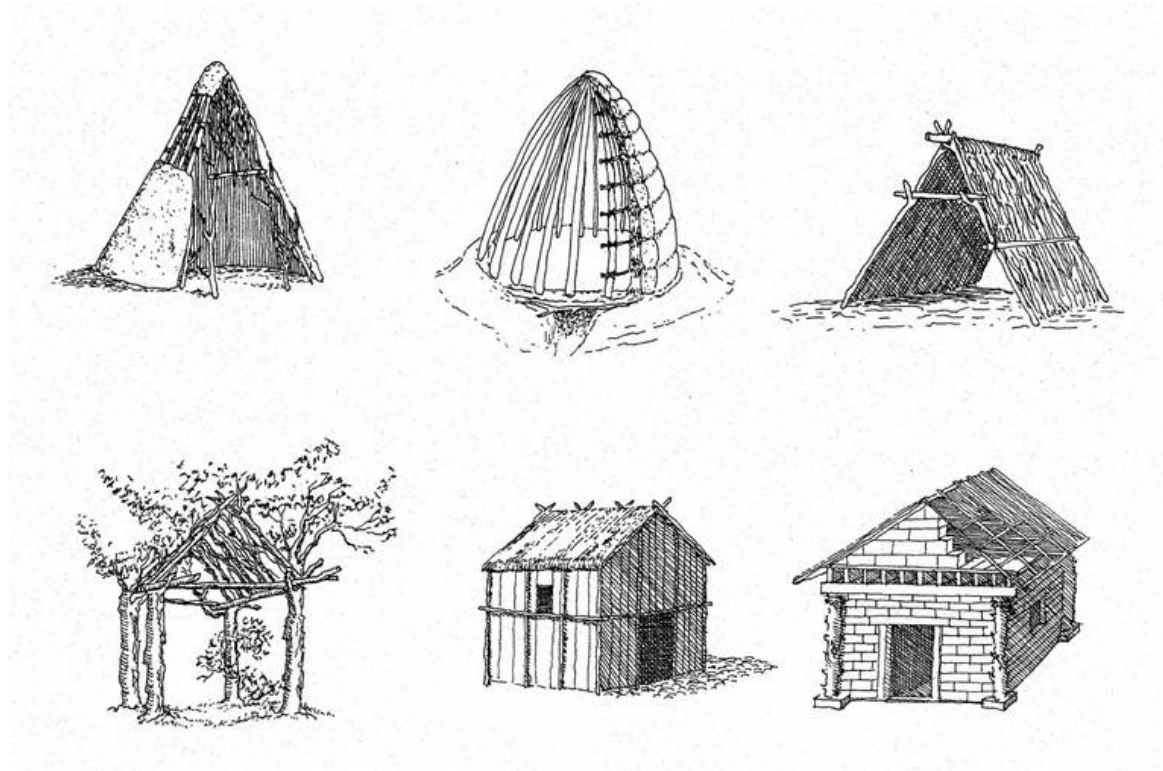


Figure 27. “Interpretations of ‘the first hut’. Top, left to right: After Viollet-le-Duc, Claude Perrault, and Walter Hermann. Bottom, left to right: After Marc-Antoine Laugier, Francesco Milizia and Jacques Francois Blondel” (Crowe 1997, p. 133).

Rasmussen (2000, p. 5) suggests that in this early architecture “the entire community took part in forming the dwellings and implements they used. The individual was in fruitful contact with these things; the anonymous houses were built with a natural feeling for place, materials and use”. Each building and community thus evolved in response to its particular site and the temporal (and thus technological) circumstances in which it was found. Ching *et al.* (2007, p. xii) states: “architectural production is always triangulated by the exigencies of time and location”, and further, “...while there are many parallels between the different regions, in actuality each developed along its own pathways and with different factors determining growth and development” (Ching *et al.* 2007, p. 5). The relationship between the buildings, the places and the communities in and with which they were constructed resulted in a “remarkably suitable comeliness” Rasmussen (2000, p. 5).

According to Crowe (1997, p. 133), “the campfire whose light fills a dome of space and provides security in the dark of night” was a precursor and guide to contemporary architectural forms as people seek to *emulate* the security found in such early camp dwellings. The shape of the glow of the fire curiously corresponds to the shape of the space of dwelling. Architecture may well be in part a response to the desire to encapsulate the space of the glow and in turn to capture and encapsulate the security thus offered.

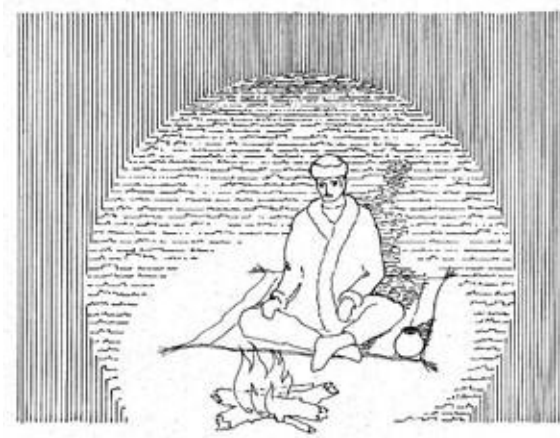


Figure 28. The space encompassed by the glow of a fire (Crowe 1997, p. 53).

In the example shown in Figure 29, the space – or hole – that is gathered by the stones is illuminated by the glow of the fire. The “hole” provided by the stones accommodates the proportions of the body. According to Crowe, this image represents a space “under which a single occupant might huddle for the body-related comfort and feeling of security such ‘personal’ shelter provides (Crowe 1997, p. 133).



Figure 29. Hole of stone (Crowe 1997, p. 53).



Many Australian Aboriginal peoples were able to advance this notion of camp-dwelling to the highest level; Aboriginal people lived in communion with their various places across Australia through shifting their dwelling site from place to place, utilising local materials and adapting to local conditions<sup>60</sup> – with local conditions adapting to inhabitation. As Kohen (1995, pp. *vii-viii*) states:

Archaeological evidence now suggests that Aboriginal people have occupied Australia for over 50,000 years, and possibly much longer. During this time, they have come to understand the land, to the extent that their spiritual beliefs about the land extend beyond any European sense of ownership. Aboriginal people see themselves as a part of the land, and as a consequence they have duties and obligations directed towards the conservation and protection of their particular ‘country’.

According to Prout (2009, p. 199), the spatial mobility of Aboriginal people continues to take place, “within the framework of procuring, cultivating, and contesting security and belonging”. It is thus apparent that Aboriginal culture and the landscape have evolved in synchronicity – with duration over time providing the validation of Aboriginal harmony<sup>61</sup>. The nomadic life of the Aboriginal people involves a desire to build a connection to place; to belong and to feel secure. These are similar attributes and values to those that dwellers in contemporary buildings attribute to their home; the spatiality, however, is reversed.

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<sup>60</sup> Opinion concerning the extent of the impact that Aboriginal people and their cultural practices have had on the landscape varies from ‘minimal’ impact to ‘extensive’ (Kohen 1995).

<sup>61</sup> The process of colonisation has had a substantial impact on the nomadic and subsistence dwelling practices of Aboriginal people. Many still strive to live as close to country as possible – partly as resistance to colonisation and also to maintain cultural traditions and ways of life.

## Drawing architecture

Throughout history, in all cultures, building shelter has involved the use of localised materials and people – particularly the family itself – to plan, arrange and construct buildings. As building became more complicated, the slow growth of architectural tradition and change was reliant upon the transmission of skills and ideas

...from one generation to the next ... through the direct teaching of the younger masons by the masters experienced in the craft ... Whatever knowledge he [sic] possessed in the art of building, he had learned either directly from his master, or from observing the results of the efforts of past masters, or from the practical experiences of his own successes and failures (Shelby 1964, pp. 388-389, italics in original).

In medieval England, for example, the role of architect and builder were one. The construction of buildings was “empirical and utilitarian” (Shelby 1964, p. 388) though embedded in place and culture. Over time, as buildings became increasingly sophisticated, and complicated, the leading builders or crafts-people became known as master masons. Indeed, the master mason was thought to be the “central figure in the whole process of building in stone” (Shelby 1964, p. 387) – the “masters of the mason’s craft” (Shelby 1964, p. 388). Referencing this relationship between thinking through design and seeing that design through to the built form is the term *architect*, translated as arkhi- ‘chief’ + tekton- ‘builder (OED 2010).

However, at various points in history, the design of buildings became bigger and more complicated than the master mason could amiably progress while holding the dual role of builder and designer. During the Renaissance in Europe, for example, from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries, the role of the single architect as designer became the norm for large scale, complicated projects. The drawing by Michelangelo (Figure 30) was discovered in 2007 in St Peter’s Basilica’s offices. It was apparently created for the use of stonecutters working on the dome. Michelangelo purportedly destroyed many of his working drawings, but this one

seems to have survived because it was used by the stone cutter to make notes about bringing stone into Rome (*Guardian* 2007). The drawing by Brunelleschi (Figure 29) conveys part of the construction details for the Santa del Fiore (Florence Cathedral). The dome designed by Brunelleschi was innovative in both design and means of construction and, thus, brilliant for its time<sup>62</sup>.

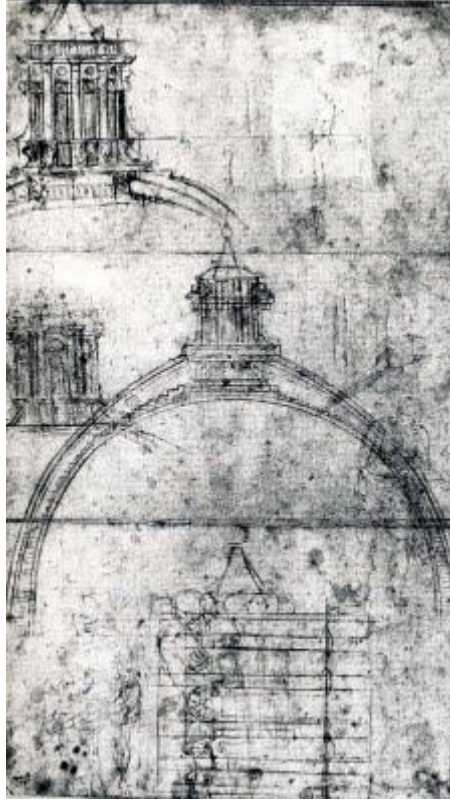


Figure 30. Michelangelo's sketches for dome of St Peter's Basilica (*Guardian* 2007).

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<sup>62</sup> For a more detailed description of these events see Brack (2013).

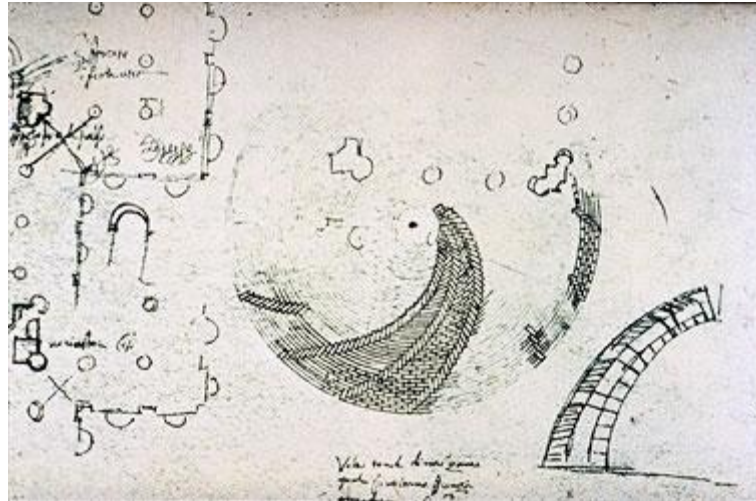


Figure 31. Brunelleschi's sketch showing plans for the construction of the Santa del Fiore (Florence Cathedral) dome (Brack 2013).

Over time the nature and quality of architectural drawings has changed considerably, as noted by Olsberg (2013, p. 36):

Drawing architecture has never been taken for granted. It has constantly changed, both as new materials, conventions and techniques appear, and as it responds to the changing visual climate. From the 18th century on, people can watch as drawings change the thickness of line to reflect that of evolving print media; adopt color [sic] codes for materials; take on the oriental isometric and axonometric projections and weave them into 19th-century schooling; use colored [sic] crayon, magic marker, strips of mylar; build in photographic elements as montage; take cues from film to sequence their narratives and from animation to people them.

The significant difference that arose between the master mason and the architect was the architect's reliance on hand-drawn blueprints in the design phase of the work, and the master mason's focus on building. The architect carried a sustained focus on the drawings – in relation to the built work – throughout the construction of the building.



It was not until the 1700s, however, that vernacular and domestic building development required the services of a trained specialist architect. Architectural drawings, at their most fundamental, facilitate the exchange of an idea from an architect or team of architects to each other or to an independent reader. The reader of the drawing interprets the lines on the page and commissions them (as in a client); approves them for construction (as in an engineer or government body); or constructs them out of specified materials in three-dimensional form and to scale (as in a master builder). The three primary formats of these drawings are plans, sections and elevations<sup>63</sup>.



Figure 32. Elevation (Dunn and Hillam Architects 2013).

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<sup>63</sup> Drawings produced by Dunn & Hillam Architects (2013) using Vectorworks computer software.

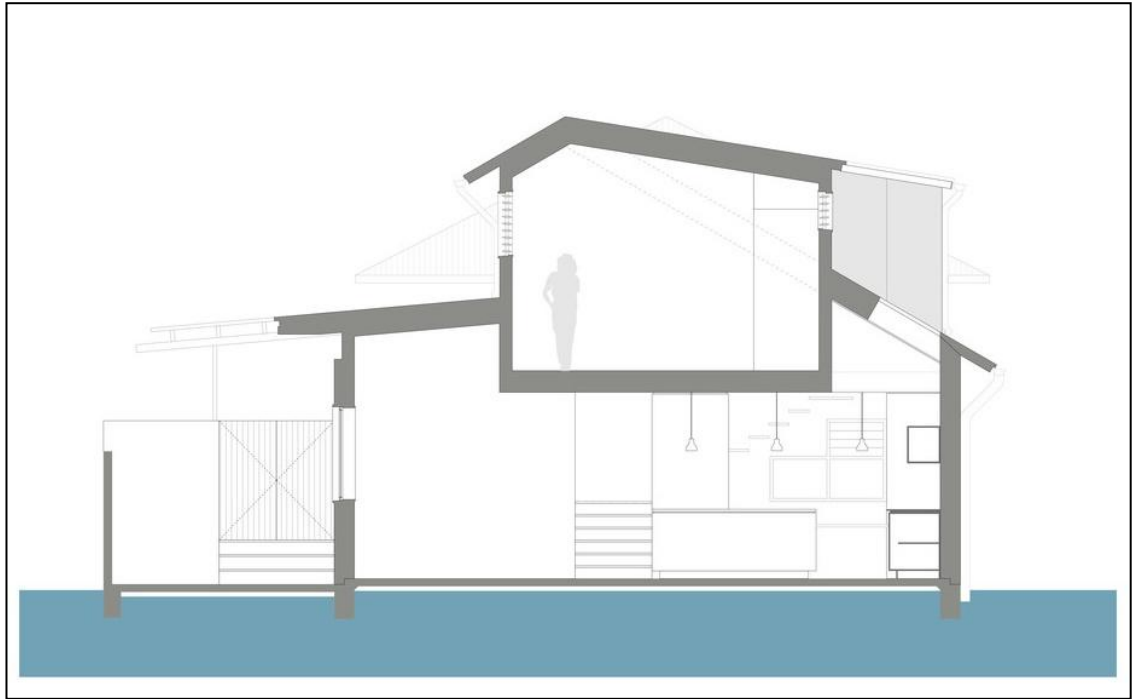


Figure 33. Section (short) (Dunn and Hillam Architects 2013).



Figure 34. Section (long) (Dunn and Hillam Architects 2013).

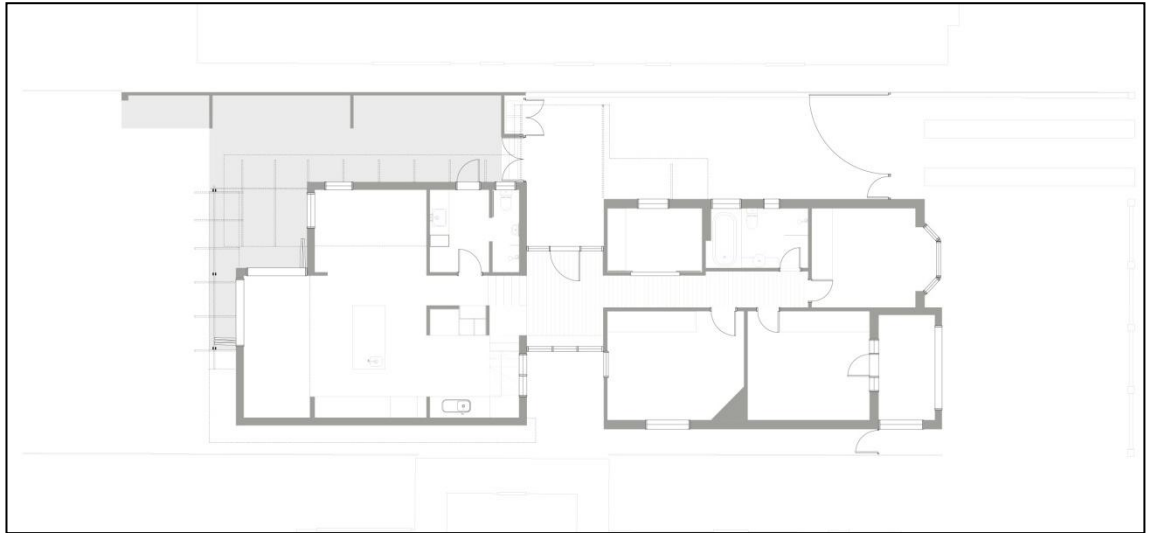


Figure 35. Ground floor plan (Dunn and Hillam Architects 2013).

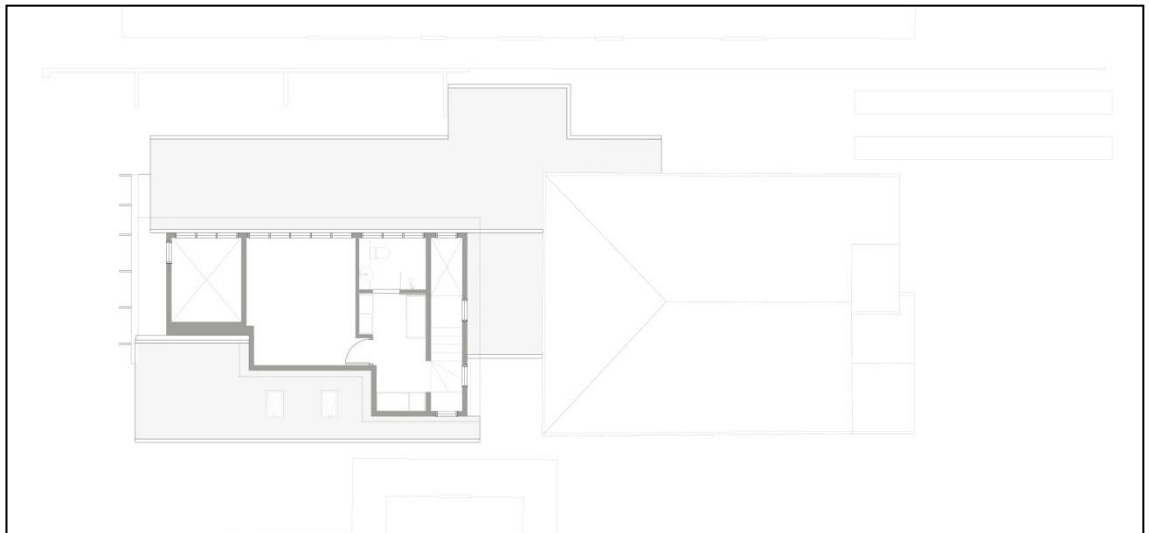


Figure 36. First floor plan (Dunn and Hillam Architects 2013).

The figures 32-37 convey section, elevation and plan drawings, and have had line details removed to enable a clear view of what each section, plan and elevation drawing represents. Figure 35 shows a plan drawing with all of the details maintained that shows the details required for planning approval. This is to demonstrate that the figures 32-37 are not true representations of architectural

designs, but have been adapted for the purposes of the exercise – to convey a simple section, elevation and plan drawing.

There is a certain drawn *language* in architectural practice – a language that allows communication between the many various parties. Indeed, “[t]he *sine qua non*<sup>64</sup> of modern building is the blueprint, with its scaled and dimensioned plans, elevations, sections, and details” (Shelby 1964, p. 390).

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<sup>64</sup> *Sine qua non* refers to an “essential condition” (OED 2010).

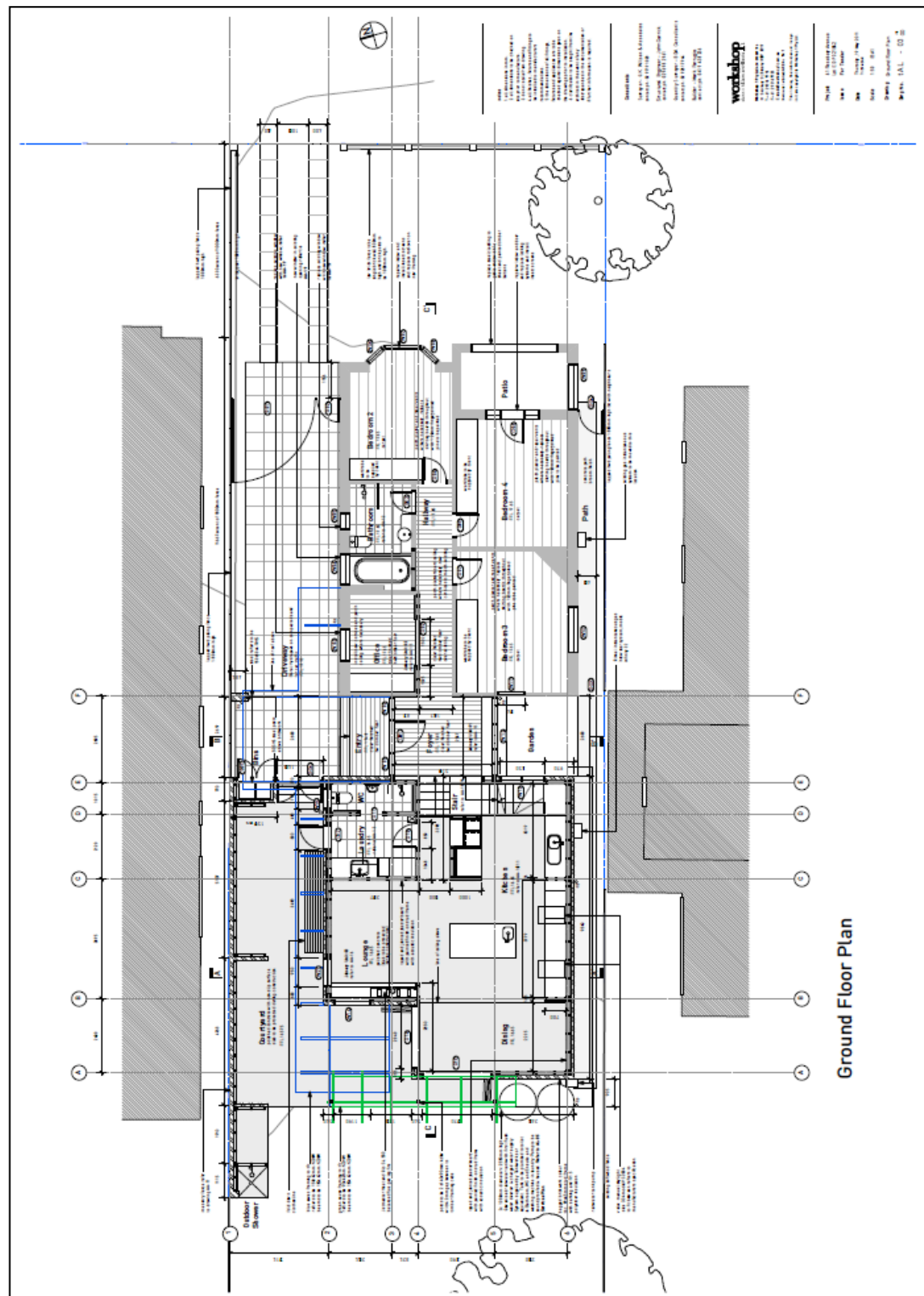


Figure 37. Detailed ground floor drawings (Dunn and Hillam Architects 2013).

To design a building, an architect must be able to conceptualise a design – in an imagined visual form – prior to its being built. To garner this conceptualisation – an image in one’s mind – the architect may make use of a number of techniques. After establishing a relationship with the clients, and drafting the brief, in the early stages, the architect is likely to visit the site. At such site visits the basic parameters of the site are noted. These parameters might include fundamentals such as aspect, hydrology, soil diversity and topography, which help to inform the developing concept<sup>65</sup>.

Site visits, however, are also an opportunity to establish a relationship with place and, thus, may allow an architect to generate a sensibility for the site<sup>66</sup>. More nuanced understandings might arise from the site’s interstices – its Aboriginal culture; the site’s history of practice since colonisation (was it once a goldmine, for example, has it been a place of logging, or a market garden); what of its animal life; its sounds and smells; its shifting seasonal light and movement of cool air down a slope in the evenings. These parameters are then balanced with the site’s future relationship to the clients and their varying needs over time. The list is endless. Essentially, however, being on a site, allowing one’s self to determine the site’s feel, the site’s sense, is about imagining a building in *that* place – that *particular* place, both now for these immediate inhabitants, but also for future people (families, friends, neighbours and communities) for some time to come.

How might an architect translate listening, smelling, touching, walking and other fluid perceptions of a particular place into a built and inhabitable form? In the first instance an architect might produce a number of concept sketches. The concept sketch may be explorative, but not without rigour and influence. While construction

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<sup>65</sup> In some instances the basic parameters of the site can be ascertained in a very short time. Tasmanian architectural firm, *Terroir*, purportedly conceived the concept and basic design for the Peppermint Bay Hotel, Woodbridge, Tasmania in a single visit of less than an hour.

<sup>66</sup> Australian architect, Richard Leplastrier has been known to set up camp on proposed sites for a number of weeks to foster a closer relationship with the place and its many subtleties.

drawings, like those shown above, have a somewhat perfunctory task – of communicating the proposed structural form – the concept sketch may utilise the process of sketching to *draw out* the design and synthesize the site’s parameters. Indeed, architectural drawing can be – and in many cases is – much *more than* a “tool of the trade” (Olsberg 2013, p. 36).

Drawing is a process of revealing one’s thoughts to one’s peers and thereby enabling communication, but it is also a process of revealing one’s thoughts to oneself.

Olsberg (2013, p. 40) states this succinctly: “[n]one of these apparently hermetic studies is fundamentally unselfconscious – in one way or another, each of these rough sheets was meant both as a way to think and a way to be seen”, whilst according to Cook and Hunter (2013, p. 64), “[t]he key thing about drawing is that it doesn’t have to be literal. You can draw something, and say that it has a certain atmosphere; that it might do something...”. In drawing forth an idea there is a certain *je ne sais quoi* that is difficult to pinpoint, though it drives the drawer to draw and draw again.

Through the *process* of drawing, an idea can be chased, extended, and even “push[ed] forward” (Cook and Hunter 2013, p. 64). Japanese architect, Fujimoto, in an interview with Obrist and Peyton-Jones (2013, p. 74), states: “...drawing is an endless process of trial-and-error to give form to the vague architectural inspirations that fill my brain. You could say that drawing is like having a dialogue with oneself”. It seems that drawing *into* and *through* an as yet unrealised building, both allows and, to some degree, creates a certain ambiguity – an unknown quality that is tapped into through drawing. Fujimoto again:

My sketches are full of blurry, hazy, random shapes. I see them as prototypes of places and spaces. Ideas become very important when I try to transform these archetypal images into three-dimensional models or architectural forms. As an architect, I must invent new ways of making architecture and new ways of making spaces as tangible ideas (Obrist and Peyton-Jones 2013, pp. 74-75).

It is apparent, therefore, that drawing plays a crucial role in the realisation of an architectural idea and, eventually, a built work. So significant is drawing as a tool to the task of revealing an architectural idea that some architects go so far as to say that the design does not need to be built at all! Peter Eisenman,<sup>67</sup> in interview with Ansari (2013, p. 82), states that “[t]he ‘real architecture’ only exists in the drawings”, as “‘real building’ exists outside the drawings”. He goes on to say that there is an important difference between “‘architecture’ and ‘building’ ... [they] are not the same”. Hunter (2013, p. 35) poses the question:

... does that mean that every idea has to be built to be validated? Not at all. The richness of ideas ... the value of describing radical visions for the future, of speculating about an architecture that may never exist, and of pursuing notions that may go nowhere at all: these are an essential part of architecture as a risk-taking discipline. It is these endeavours that keep the culture of architecture alive, and ultimately push built reality to greater heights.

Eisenman (1992, p. 423) brings the human perception of time – or lack thereof – into the discussion around this somewhat *disembodied* architecture:

Traditionally, architecture was placebound, linked to a condition of experience. Today, mediated environments challenge the givens of classical time, the time of experience: on any afternoon anywhere in the world, whether at the Prado in Madrid or the Metropolitan in New York, hordes of people pass before artworks, hardly stopping to see, at best perhaps merely photographing their experience. They have no time for the original, even less for the experience of the original. Due to media, the time of experience has changed; the soundbite – infinitesimal, discontinuous, autonomous – has conditioned our new time.

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<sup>67</sup> Of the 150 buildings that Eisenman has designed, only 25 have been built (Ansari 2013).



Through the process of removing the building from architecture, Eisenman reflects on the way human beings have become enveloped in new perceptions of space and place. “Architecture can no longer be bound by the static conditions of space and place, here and there. In a mediated world, there are no longer places in the sense that we once knew them. Architecture must now address the problem of the event” (Eisenman 1992, p. 423). In doing so, people have shaped their own becoming, such that architecture now provides the opportunity to draw that becoming. As such, drawings may never be realised as built forms, yet still be architecture. Such boundary stretching means that the architectural form is limited by a different kind of parameter.

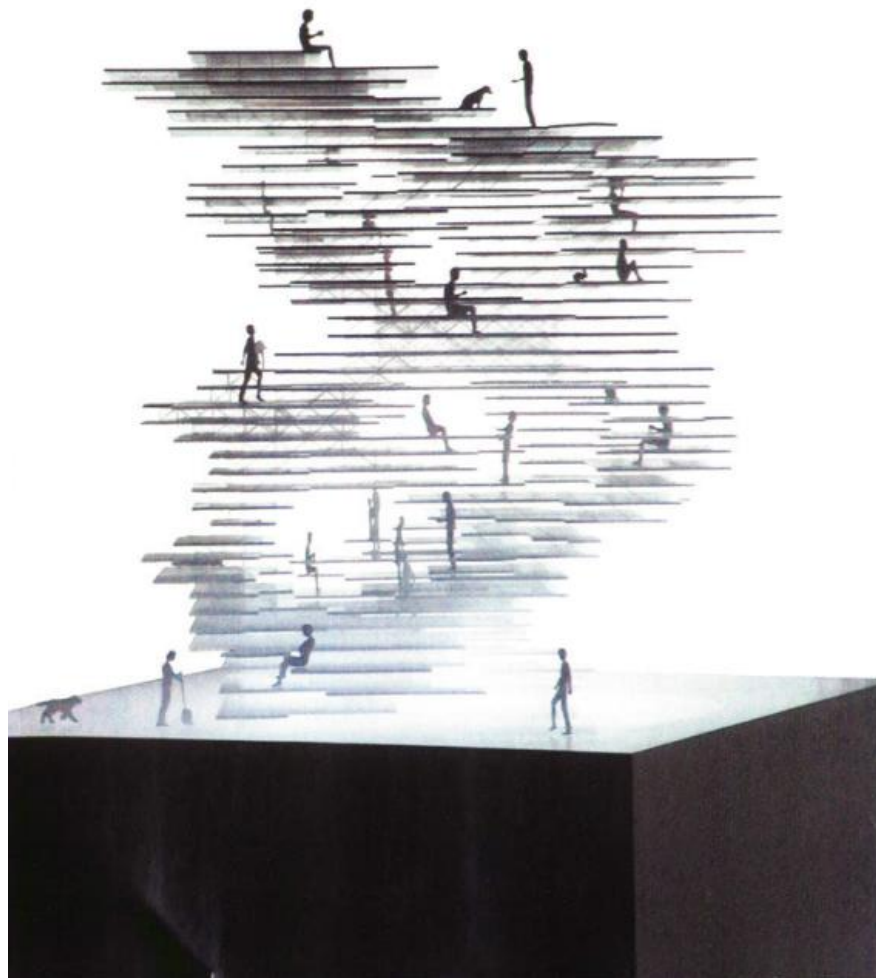


Figure 38. Sou Fujimoto's unrealised 'Primitive Future House ' (Obrist and Peyton-Jones 2013)

Fujimoto, on the other hand, prefers to hold hope that his endeavours will be realised. He states: “[h]owever wildly imaginative a project may be, it is important to believe that one day it will be built” (Obrist and Peyton-Jones 2013, p. 75). Realising an architectural idea in built form is in part determined by the materials and construction technology available at the time. For example, while Brunelleschi extended the capacity of what was possible at the time of construction for the dome atop the Santa del Fiore, he was not able to make use of computers, just as now we are not able to use what we have not yet dreamed of. Experiencing a drawn architectural idea provides a window to the power and scope of the imagination and, thus, what things could be allocated resources and/or will. A drawn work has the potential to tap straight to the heart of the viewer – engaging their sensibility for hope – or lack thereof. It is a realm engaged with what *might* or *could be* rather than what *is* or *should be* and as a result it carries the weightlessness and joy of possibility.

While the theoretical principles of architectural drawing, seen, for example, in Fujimoto’s Primitive Future House (Figure 36), are significant and potentially *moving*, such experience held within the observation of the drawing is arguably different in its sensual register to that of the built form<sup>68</sup>.

## Architecture and experience

While the experience of engaging with *drawn* architecture is something significant and profound in its own right – bridging close to visual arts – the experience of a built work engages a different set of sensual and perceptive registers, particularly when experiencing buildings designed with inhabitation in mind. There is something cogent in the mapped orientation of a body in space. Within the built form, movement is guided by the presence of walls, doors, floors, stairways, fireplaces and windows. The physicality of such structures determines where a body *can* go and

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<sup>68</sup> This may not be easily tested as those drawings that remain un-built are not experienced in built form. Perhaps this will be the task of virtual architecture – to facilitate awareness of un-built forms in virtual spaces.

where it *cannot*; thus these structures act to determine the *flow* of spaces and generate patterns of movement. The placement of these structural components is not accidental; indeed, their placement is part of the role – and skill – of the architect.

The practices of everyday living require certain functions: to cook and eat, sleep, toilet, bathe and groom. While these perfunctory tasks are a necessary part of everyday life, embedded within them are their accompanying sensations. By this I mean feelings of warmth or cold, patterns of light, variations in sound, access to smells, the texture of surfaces and harmony within which the amalgamation of such sensations occur. Done well, architecture lingers in one's mind – though it may not be possible to pinpoint how or why such awareness becomes apparent. According to McCarter and Pallasmaa (2012, p. 5), “[a]rchitecture that endures engages the embodied experience, engaging all our senses acting in concert, including the haptic sense of bodily position, balance and movement”, and further, “[m]emorable architecture involves an embodied experience, determined by the reach and grasp of our hand, the touch of our fingers, the feeling of heat and cold on our skin, the sounds of our footsteps, the stance we have taken and the position of our eye”. Such characteristics of architectural experience are present in the most rustic of dwellings and, thus, are egalitarian in access. As Bachelard ([1958] 1994, p. 4) suggests, “[i]f we look at it intimately, the humblest dwelling has beauty”.

As put forward by Dovey ([1999] 2008), architecture provides a frame that shapes the spaces through which we live, but it is also a frame for how we see ourselves and each other. Architecture is a personal and intimate response to place and, regardless of whether it helps or hinders an awareness of poetic space, it shapes the collective cultural heart of a place. For that reason it is of profound importance (Ballantyne 2002). As McCarter and Pallasmaa (2012, p. 6) appositely state:

Architecture does not direct or channel our experience of it, and it does not lead us to singular interpretation. Rather, architecture offers us an open field of possibilities, and it stimulates and emancipates our perceptions, associations, feelings and thoughts. A meaningful building

does not propose anything specific; it inspires us to see, sense, feel and think ourselves. Great architectural works sharpen our senses, open our perceptions and make us receptive to the realities of the world. The real purpose of architecture is not to create aestheticized objects or spaces, but to provide frames, horizons and settings for experiencing and understanding the world and, finally, ourselves.

Among the confluence of circumstances that conceived this thesis has been my ongoing relationship with a particular dwelling, home, house, place and family. Of particular significance in this set of experiences was my capacity to find moments in or around any situation of chaos to *contemplate*. Contemplation, often described as daydreaming, is a gift that I have possessed since I was a baby. I have come to love this ‘gift’. In Bachelard I found a kindred spirit, and this is perhaps why I have found architecture, and more specifically, the home, so encompassing and nurturing. As Bachelard ([1958] 1994, p. 6) states, “...the house is one of the greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories and dreams of mankind [sic]. The binding principle in this integration is the daydream”. I remain perplexed as to the nature of the relation between house and human, but I am convinced that the relationship is there. Heidegger (1971) talks about contemplation of the space between the earth and the sky, and I have found myself lingering in that perpetual-moment-space; awareness punctuated by fog and rain, the speed of a southerly buster or the warm orange afternoon light – so converse that they hardly hold still in the same sentence.

When McCarter and Pallasmaa (2012, p. 5) suggest that “our eye is never fixed and focused only on one point, (as is suggested by the photographs of buildings)” I am drawn back to the space between the earth and the horizon, and in such contemplation I am also drawn by my own ponderings. As McCarter and Pallasmaa (2012, p. 5) state: “[a]rchitecture only exists in the lived experience, and thinking about architecture has to be grounded in the personal encounter with the work in question”. I know this to be so. On the other hand, when they suggest that “[t]he meaning of a work of architecture, which can move us to tears, does not lie in the material structure itself or the geometric and compositional intricacies of the work;

rather it arises from the encounter of the viewer's body and mind with the physical and mental reality of the building" (McCarter and Pallasmaa 2012, p. 6), I cannot wholeheartedly agree. I can see the importance of the experience, but I can also register the significance of the built form. While even the most humble of dwellings provides the capacity for daydream, I must acknowledge that some buildings – even the most humble – carry a way of being in the world that foster and nurture the contemplation to which Heidegger refers, though some do make that contemplation much more difficult.

Settling into Bachelard's daydream or Heidegger's contemplation, "...[w]e settle into the space and the space dwells in us; architecture becomes part of us and we become part of it. A profound work of architecture does not remain outside us as a separate object; we live and experience ourselves through the work, and it guides, directs and conditions the way we understand ourselves to be in the world" (McCarter and Pallasmaa 2012, p. 6). The experiential encounter is the opposite of detached observation from outside; it is a complete fusion of our setting and our selves. Earlier experiences and memories merge into the mental reality of this encounter, and we complete the work presented by the architect, as it were, making it our own. In so doing, "the [architectural] experience [becomes] ... transformative ... fusing temporal dimensions and reconnecting us with layers of deep forgotten memories. The architectural experience [becomes] ... not just a visual or sensorial encounter; a great work engages our entire being, altering our existential sense – our very sense of self – changing both the world and us" (McCarter and Pallasmaa 2012, p. 7).

In the midst of this contemplative daydream is a space that facilitates betweenness and again we come a little closer to illuminating its presence. Architecture sits at the heart of human dwelling. The built form can influence the extent of the practices that go on around and through it. In addition, the building, while holding you, sends you out – that is, to engage with the world one stretches out from a safe haven. The fluidity of that relation – between oneself and the world – is dependent, in part, upon that built form. A building that can provide, and enhance that engagement, in turn

gives access to betweenness. Betweenness, in this instance, is manifest in the way the building user (for want of a better term) approaches the world. The building is the foundation of the person. It follows then, that a building that facilitates experience in and with place, carries through the person to the world around.

## Summation

In this chapter I have demonstrated that arts-based creative culture is a process of shaping the world through creative practice. A creative practitioner's *creative field* is the chosen medium through which they operate – and the scope through which they imagine that professional creative practice. I have used three creative fields – poetry, dance and architecture – to illuminate the role of creativity in shaping the parameters of human culture. Creative practice is a key mechanism in the capacity to access betweenness. Creative practice has at its very heart the practitioner's quest to occupy the realm of the as yet unknown and the yet to be. *Dancing at the edge* (LeGuin 1989) is to bring *betweenness* into the world. This is what creative practice strives to achieve. In that space, that fractal moment of engaging with a work of creative practice – that *uh-ha* moment of cognitive or visceral recognition – miraculous transformations become possible.

In the following chapter I will introduce the data component of the research and further coax forth betweenness as it might be given presence.

## Interlude: Animalia

*It's late, but I don't feel tired. It's a clear night; the moon is a bit over half full. I cleared the roads this morning, and yesterday – and there were only two possums and a wallaby. I don't like to stop in the night, unless I really have to. Stella died more than ten years ago, but I still worry about her worrying about me driving at night. How funny, she could do just about anything, but she never got comfortable either with cars or with young women being out alone at night.*

*It is interesting that this road and I have intersected. It is interesting that the road has resonated with stories and people in my family line. Mostly, it makes me think of my grandmother, Stella. Her story was interesting – well, moving. When she was 17, at the end of the First World War, Stella was married to a fellow called Jack Smith. He was a much older man than Stella, probably due to the shortage of men after the war. Jack owned land (a long, long way from Stella's home) somewhere out bush. The nearest neighbour turned out to be two days' ride by buggy, a bit less by horseback. It wasn't that life in the country town where she had grown up was particularly social, but there were stores, churches and police stations and several families had a motorcar. Living in the bush, though, was isolated and lonely and it meant endless hard physical work. It made her tough; not like 'prison' tough, more like 'leather' tough. She sometimes talked about the things she did like trapping, skinning and preparing native animals for food. I think because of her time out there, she learned to grow vegetables and fruit with quite extraordinary commitment and skill. She lived for a long time out there; she had four babies and as far as I can tell, it was more that she survived than thrived.*

*After Jack died, it was my father, then 15, who made two trips in the old truck to get the family and their belongings to their new life in different, more fertile country to the south. First he and his brothers raised dairy cows and sold milk by horse and cart and then went back to logging – cedar, woolly butt, stringy bark and iron bark – when the truck became affordable. Timber was in high demand with new people in*

*the area and new homes being built. One log at a time came out for milling, and he built a bush-pole shed to mill them himself. He augmented the logging work with the making of fire trails into the bush and managed to take the trees out without clearing much land. He picked up bits of land and sold them on a bit later. I was always amazed, and I think he was too, that he still had all his fingers, because none of the machines had any guards or safety switches. On the couple of times I went there it was always very loud in a brittle kind of way and considering the conditions he probably wasn't as deaf as he should have been. The mixed smell of cedar sawdust, sweat and tobacco have been etched into my memory.*

*When I got to know Stella, it was about the little things she did that registered most strongly. When I was a teenager I remember getting really frustrated at her for eating jam off a butter knife, straight from the jar – many times. I caught her once cutting her toenails with a big blue-blade butcher's knife. She wrote lots of letters and loved to tuck things away. She could make anything grow, anywhere, and never really embraced the fridge. In one endearing manoeuvre she unknowingly gave my sister, roughly folded into brown paper, a necklace. In a twist of serendipity, my sister regained the special necklace she had worn to Christmas day the year before – and lost climbing the orange tree in the front vegetable garden. Stella gave me the bottle of 4711 perfume someone had once given her, that she had used many times. It was different, she was different, and on the long drive home my sister and I shook our heads at the wonder of it. It was curious, and we were curious; and with all of her oddities, it was kind of sad, but we didn't really love her for it.*

*When she died, thin and pale, I cried and cried. She left her golden watch with the tiny face, old and fragile; a few black and white photographs and several newspaper cuttings that she had held close. I still have her old nightie – partly for the careful mending and re-mending she had done, but partly for the reminder. There were a few stories, but not a lot – stories about dirt floors, trapping possums, the many diseases, the tragic accidents and beloved cousins; she liked to hear them as well as tell them and seemed to prefer the extraordinary to the ordinary.*



*When I started driving this road, drawing this line, it was Stella who came to mind. I think it was the animals. I imagined touching these dead forms, but it was her hands that I imagined at the ends of my arms. I came to understand that people simply drive over them, around them. At first I had to force myself to blur my eyes – it was too difficult, too shocking and even nauseating to let myself focus. It's always a gamble; you want to see, but sometimes what you see is terribly confronting. After a time, my constitution must have toughened – at least a little, as I was able to look. I think I wanted to feel; I wanted to know what it felt like to see. Slowly I came to understand the processes of decay. It was the smell, certainly in summer, and the maggots. In winter it was slower; it can take months for a body to turn to dust – a dust that blows in the wind or washes with the rain.*

*The practice of looking at the animals allowed me to see elements of my own humanity in our shared animalia. From my windscreen I could see bones and intestines and blood; if I really looked, I could see eyes and tongues; injuries and fear. After a while I couldn't help but look; I couldn't help but see. There was something curious about the process of being killed and then left to dissolve – in full view and on an impermeable surface. It struck me as like a war zone where the casualties are left in 'no man's land' or simply marched over. I wondered how people could do this every day – to drive over and over the same animal. At that point I made a decision; I chose to participate in the animals' decay. I chose to be 'The Keeper of the Roads'. I craved a relationship with the animals – something that recognised and illuminated my grandmother's connection with animals and the land. I craved a connection with her way of being in the world, her way of being where she was. I, like her, was somewhere too, and while life had guided me in particular directions and paths, I couldn't resign from my ability to choose. People make choices every day to drive over and around dead animals. I chose not to.*

*The first time I stopped the car, I was terrified. It made me realise the security I had come to understand – the security found on the inside of my car. At once the car was my armour, my cave, my weapon, my power. Opening the door was like entering a new world. Stopping the car shifted my gaze, not only in what I was seeing, but how I*

*was experiencing these animals. Approaching an animal on the road was confronting on many levels. Being in the middle of the road where an animal has been recently killed is a dangerous place to be. Such situations absorb your concentration and I had to constantly remind myself to stay acutely alert to the sound of approaching cars.*

*Being 'The Keeper of the Road', I vowed that I would be responsible for every animal that died on my line. I made a commitment to move every road-killed animal onto the ground; the earth; the soil. It tripled my travelling time and significantly increased my risk; I learned to wear a fluorescent vest, I carried a shovel and gloves. I took photographs to memorialise their death and a GPS recording of the place on the road where they were hit. I was 'The Keeper of the Road' – and it felt good.*

# Chapter 5: The Capacity to be Altered

## **Introduction**

We have arrived at a chapter specifically dedicated to betweenness. In this chapter, I briefly recap the role of autoethnography as a subtle, yet significant source of *data*. In addition, and forming the bulk of this chapter, I introduce the voices of research participants, as they illuminate several vantage points that help to position betweenness in the world as it is experienced.

We have seen that betweenness is present in iconic and grand architectural edifices such as the Sydney Opera House (Chapter 2), but the question of how it might manifest on a random line of road in rural remote Tasmania in another question entirely. People do not, for example, flock to a remote section of road to experience and photograph a nondescript bushy shrub or one of millions of roadside reflector posts. Rather, people have a tendency to seek out the noteworthy, and, in a rural landscape that might be a picturesque view, a quaint farmhouse, an old tractor or a characteristic sunset. It is the everyday spaces of little note or interest to the broader populace that this research has brought to attention.

An autoethnographic approach has been used to explore my own journey between two places; the result is the selection of autoethnographic writing that forms the interludes of this thesis. Autoethnographic material has been utilised to illuminate several aspects of the spirit of the places through which I regularly journeyed alone, the way that I was able to approach place, and to let the thesis breathe its argument in an open way. Due to my own journey resonating as a fecund space through which to explore the everyday, I expanded the study to investigate the everyday journeys between two places of creative practitioners in Tasmanian landscapes. A synthesis of the resulting material may be found below.

## Position 1: Everything is between, but not everything is betweenness.

### Between

Not everything in the world is certain. In this research, however, it is necessary to trust that the world is made up of things. Because the world is made up of things, we may deduce that all things occur in spatio-temporal relationships with other things. A thing is itself a thing, and thus is part of a network that creates a space *between*, through its orientation with other things (see the space between the objects in Figure 39 for example).



Figure 39. Two or more things generates a between space between them (Armanious 1998).

A thing is simultaneously itself *between*, as it is oriented amongst other things (see the smaller doll in the pink dress in the middle of two other dolls in Figure 40, for example).



Figure 40. The thing between things (Ficella 2012).

Things, even though they are not fixed in single places, are always in spatio-temporal orientation with other things. We can, thus, concur that *everything* is always *between*.

*Between* is a word that is used in English as part of everyday speech and communication<sup>69</sup>. People use *between* to make reference to things they cannot describe or articulate and may not understand. For example, in mathematics, *between*

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<sup>69</sup> The etymology of *between* and the nature of *betweenness* as a sum of *betweens* was discussed in Chapter 3.

zero and the number one, there is an infinite number of numbers; in everyday speech, friends might agree to meet in the park *between* 11 and 11.30am<sup>70</sup>; a scientist might describe a relationship *between* the individual members of a school of fish or a flock of birds; or lovers might say ‘there is something *between* us’. The bond of marriage *between* two people is popularly assumed to be a universal and knowable phenomenon; it is considered a quantifiable (and thus controllable) practice. In actuality of lived experience, it is as unique as there are married persons in the way it is understood and embodied. Marriage is an evolving and particular practice, unique to each and every couple.

It becomes apparent that the bond or the space *between* is open to both question and interpretation. *Between* appears to be an understanding, a way of relating to another person or thing, or, a relationship *among* things<sup>71</sup>.

We use *between* as a convenient tool to counter the inherently difficult nature of detail. *Between* is used because it is easier than trying to explain, because trying to explain is exactly that – *trying* to explain. To use words to describe something is to generate a representation of the actual objects and is, therefore, an approximation of the real thing. Indeed, *between* plays with the slippage inherent to representation discussed in chapter 3. *Between* is, thus, a shortcut; it is a word-saving exercise. The term *between* allows people, through language, to gloss over the details of any

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<sup>70</sup> When this is conceived in units of time, it is slightly more quantifiable than simply numbers. The space between 11 and 11.30 is potentially infinite depending on how small the units of measurement are.

<sup>71</sup> ‘The cup is between the honey and the milk’ suggests that there is a spatial arrangement between the three things, but there is nothing specific about it; *between* allows us to generalise, to make assumptions and to speculate. We do not, for example, say that the cup is 7.2cm from the honey and 6.8 cm from the milk and the arrangement of milk, cup and honey is exactly diagonal on a North/South axis, 45cm from the edge of the table. Instead, we simply say the cup is *between* the milk and the honey.

situation; it allows language to be more efficient. Between is a very important, even crucial, semiotic concept.

## Betweenness

*Between* and *betweenness* are related terms, but carry important distinctions, and, contrary to logical assumption, not *all* betweens constitute a state of betweenness. Betweenness (like between) may be a fundamental constituent of things and their spatio-temporal relationships. Betweenness, however, relies on perception; it is how one perceives what they are exposed to that determines whether or not it may be constituted as a betweenness. Perception, though, is party to all manner of influences and depends entirely on one's life experiences.

People perceive the world in different and unique ways, through a variety of social, cultural, religious and political lenses. Unfixed meaning allows phenomena (including things) to be perceived with varying degrees of significance, each of which is unique to each human being<sup>72</sup>. Calculating the significance of things is subjective and while it is informed by one's relative location in space and time, it also involves the interplay of many different psychological, social, cultural, experiential and intellectual variables. For this reason, each individual will perceive some phenomena (and things) to carry a greater significance than others<sup>73</sup>.

In the world today entire collectives of people share understandings and beliefs. Religion presents the most noteworthy example, though following a particular political party or adhering to a particular shared understanding of historical events

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<sup>72</sup> This applies also to non-human, living things. The value, for example, of a hollow tree to a nesting cockatoo is far greater than to a wallaby or a bushwalker. The value of walking boots is far greater to a bushwalker than to a wallaby or a cockatoo, or indeed, a person with no desire to bush-walk.

<sup>73</sup> As noted in Chapter 3, the collective significance of individual things is referred to as iconic; the Sydney Opera House, Mt Fuji and Madonna are but three of many examples.

are others. Structures of governance, powerful institutions, and powerful individuals are responsible for these shared beliefs, whilst physical and geographical location and socio-economic status and class – one's place in the world and birth into a pre-existing set of relationships – play roles also.

The relationship between adult and child is instrumental in the dissemination of culture and belief, along with the role of the family more generally and that of the state. Adults as parents, teachers and opinion framers have a large stake in the type and amount of knowledge shared with children. Learning and the capacity for learning does not cease at childhood, and once responsibility is passed to the child to manage their own well-being, and they are removed from the clutches of schools and churches, some young adults go forth to discover the world anew. For many, however, such opportunities remain elusive.

The amount and type of information to which a person has access determines what it is that they may come to know. New media technologies, primarily in the form of the internet, assist people to take control of their own information pathways. In some countries people struggle to access unrestricted information (China is an example) or, as in the case of Afghanistan, suffer the tensions of war and thus the media control that accompanies such difficult circumstances. In times of conflict, or when countries are controlled by fundamentalist religious groups or enforced political regimes, restrictions are often imposed on particular sub-sets of the population, with women and girls often bearing the brunt.

Access to information is a key factor in the construction of shared understandings. In the contemporary era, the media play a profound role in disseminating information and, thus, exposure to media outlets plays a central role in how people recognise and understand the world. Mass broadcasting means that individuals are exposed to the same information, and thus, may be moulded in similar ways, *en masse*. The populace places trust in information, but it is the things that we do not think to question that are the most insidious at controlling our thoughts and actions.



For many individuals, questioning the way the world is perceived and understood is paramount to good citizenship. Being alert to the mechanisms of deep power and influence that are embedded within relations and structures of communication and governance enables one to be open to other possibilities for understanding ways of being in the world. It is through one's capacity to perceive critically that one gains the capacity to *alter* – and, thus, the very possibility of betweenness becomes possible. One's capacity to perceive alterity determines one's capacity to search for the betweenness of things. Relying on the fixity of things – their meaning, engaged through processes of representation – is an unthinking trust that denies the movement between state A and state B that is the essence of betweenness.

Access to a *space* or *state* of betweenness is determined in part by one's frame of reference, but also by one's state of mind – the way that capacity is approached. It is the life's work of creative practitioners to procure glimpses of betweenness; to make work that is able to touch *another* person. In making the work, the creative practitioner must be skilled in the appreciation of betweenness. Partly this involves knowing when to stop; when not to take a work further. Photo-media artist, Pat Brassington (in interview, 2010) suggests that “I’ve been in situations where I’m between wanting to do something and – no, don’t”. Brassington suggests that it is about sensing, knowing when a work is doing something, having affect or making an impact: “Creating the image ... you just know when it’s good ... visually you are taken aback” (in interview, 2010). This, I suggest, is a process of recognising the inchoate, sensed awareness of the betweenness. While the creative practitioner may determine that the views of others are inconsequential or reliant upon chance they are also in a position where they are able to make judgements about whether the work will do something or affect others.



Figure 41. Pat Brassington, *Forget your perfect offering* (2008), pigment print, 20x15cm.



Figure 42. Pat Brassington, *Voicing* (2001c), pigment print, 56x75cm.



Figure 43. Pat Brassington, *Starlight* (2001a) pigment print, 64x43cm.



Figure 44. Pat Brassington, *Twins* (2001b), pigment print, 55x70cm.



Figure 45. Pat Brassington, *Unspecified procedures* (2005), pigment print, 80x64cm.



Figure 46. Pat Brassington, *Space for dreams #4* (2009) pigment print, 74x58cm.

Given that creative practitioners work in the realms of perception, interpretation and questioning as part of their creative practice, how might they respond to betweenness? To return to the problematic with which this sub-section began, it is necessary to determine how *between* and *betweenness* are perceived differently.

Betweenness is a dependent process; both the self and the other – two (or more) things – are required before betweenness becomes a possibility, and, particular qualities must be present in both the self and the other for betweenness to crystallise. That is, firstly, the self must be open to perception, and, secondly, the other must carry qualities – unique to the perceptive self – that may be perceived, translated, coded and (potentially) understood. Betweenness participates in a similar slippage to *between* (see page 103), though in this case it is a space between that shapes, twists, distorts, fuses, stretches and transports the viscerally tuned body of the participant(s).

Betweenness, we have seen, is a slippery concept. It is difficult, and perhaps impossible, to describe. Thus, betweenness came out in the interviews in a number of different ways, and it was my role as a researcher to assess when it was present and being conveyed. One technique for doing this was to determine when a creative practitioner was referring to *between*, even when they were using the term *betweenness*. Or, though they thought that they were telling me about *between*, it was actually *betweenness* that they were describing. Or, they described to me how, on their journey, it was a *between*, but in their art, a *betweenness*.

The use of the ‘journey’ as a literal between – a *space* between two *places* – and a tool to access betweenness may have added some complexity to the conversations rather than simplifying them. It was, however, useful as a way of opening the conversation; through the *between* to bring *betweenness* into the discussion; and to have the between-journey as a medium – a lens through which to access betweenness. The creative practitioners who contributed to this study utilised a diverse array of contexts in which to make reference to between(ness). That said, participants did not provide substantial material on betweenness, and in fact, finding betweenness in the data was actually quite difficult, even though betweenness was made clearly available as the research focus – through the title of the research and the use of the journey as an entry point.

In many cases I was able to discern that participants thought they were describing betweenness. On several occasions, the word *betweenness* was used, but from the vantage point of this study, they were actually referring to a *between*. The journey is intimately bound into the discussion, as this was the lens to access the between. Between and betweenness relate to each other, and both becoming present through the lens of the journey made it necessary to tease them apart. In doing so it was necessary to unravel conversations to illuminate the sometimes quiet, sometimes pronounced differences.

Travelling to his shack<sup>74</sup> on a Friday afternoon, poet, Pete Hay (in interview, 2010) states the purpose of his journey, “I don’t think of it as a *betweenness*”. The journey is “... a means to an end. It is what I have to do to get there... its purpose is ... *primary*” (in interview, 2010). That Hay regards his journey as primary activity, with a purpose of getting him to his destination, means that from this vantage point he sees his journey as a *between* rather than a *betweenness*; his journey is perfunctory and systematic. In describing his relationship with the journey, however, Hay states “I never get sick of it, it’s rich and I love it” (in interview, 2010). He adds, “... the way around Dennes Point is slightly longer, [but] sometimes I ... take it just to prolong the trip ... if I could say ‘beam me up Scottie and put me down on Bruny Island’ I probably wouldn’t. I would probably still do what I am doing now” (in interview, 2010). He admits that there is a tension in that scenario. While holding deep affection, and even extending the journey to prolong it, even though it is “interesting ... enriching ... rewarding and educative”, it is still “what [he has] to do to get there” (in interview, 2010).

Hay demonstrates that his journey is a literal *between* in that it is perfunctory and primary; it is an integral component of everyday movement and a requirement of his capacity to arrive at his destination, in this case his shack. It is also a journey that he would do anyway, even if he did not need to. The tension between these two positions is disentangled when Hay states, “[a]lthough it is a single trip, it is not just a single story” (in interview, 2010). In this statement, Hay shows that a journey, or anything for that matter, while singular in actual transport, can multiply in the way that we know, remember and relay it. Hay shows us that while his journey is a *between*, it is also a *betweenness*. While he could recognise the qualities akin to *between*, he struggled to name the journey a *betweenness*. He did, however, respond

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<sup>74</sup> “A shack is a roughly built building that families go to at weekends. In many ways shacks evoke older stories of what life is, that harked back to both Aboriginal Tasmania and peasant Europe”. Constructed out of all manner of materials, and often located on the most beautiful sites, “[s]hacks ... are perhaps one of the most endearing aspects of Tasmanian life. They arose in a world where people were too poor to afford any other holiday” (Flanagan 2003, no page given).

to my request to make a work (in the medium of his choice) that reflects betweenness (see Hay in press).

In writing the poem Hay reflects on the journey that links his home and his shack. ‘The Space Between’ tracks a journey from point A to point B, but, it also constructs a journey from *between* to *betweenness*. It becomes evident that not only are between and betweenness different, but – perhaps through a combined process of reflection and engagement – what is between is able to *become* betweenness. Hay’s poem, ‘The Space Between’ follows.

This poem has been removed for  
copyright or proprietary reasons.

Hay, Peter, The space between, unpublished

In the first part of the poem (and the journey) Hay is somewhat discombobulated by the circumstances of his own reflection. His deliberation on the journey has made apparent his car-sanitised alienation from the world outside: “It is how we travel now,/ hermetically sealed,/ denied the ground, denied the touch of it...”. In this early part of the poem (and journey) Hay reflects on the mundanity of the journey: “the flatscreen projection without end,/ spooling on through space and time” and the a sense of perpetual and frustrating emptiness of the journey: “not here, not there... a fretful state... constant shift... fracture... suspended... misalignment... the true void”. Indeed, the void, and the poetic devices he uses to construct it are anxious, claustrophobic and *terrifying*.

The second phase of the poem introduces us to the ‘the narky’<sup>75</sup>, more formally known as the Tasmanian Native-hen (Birdlife Australia, 2014). We glimpse the bird “[i]ts slate-blue suit tugs constantly/ at the edge of the eye”; it is a “nervy dweller at the perilous verge”, inhabiting the side of the road. The journey (and the poem) spools on. Hay meditates on “the space between the world that made you and the chaotic becoming that is not yours to shape” through several wary, yet philosophically stoic stanzas until he again encounters the narky as it marks his “passage through the suspended realm” of the space between. While the narky faces native predators and escapes extinction as a species (for now); on this occasion, of this poem, of this journey, the narky exhibits, “a flurry”, a “squabble”, a “sudden dash”, and the moment, “all impulse and pointless”, marks an ending: STOP. A switch has been thrown. It is a moment that demands a moment’s silence.

In the “lightening crack”, the “caught-breath lick of time”, “the risk-fraught strike” ... “the point of supreme engagement” – something changes – in the poem and in the journey. “The terror” that is found at the “poised and loaded instant” houses the

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<sup>75</sup> The ‘narky’ is the common name for *Tribonyx mortierii* and is also colloquially referred to as the ‘turbo chook’. One of 12 bird species endemic to Tasmania, the narky is flightless bird that lives in open grassy areas and close to water. Living in small groups, the narky is known for its raucous call and response – the ‘narky chorus’. It is a familiar inhabitant of road verges (Birdlife Australia, 2014).



“fractal point of pure containment” and the moment of “perfect possibility”. The death of the narky marks a beginning; it cannot not be so. In Hay’s poem, I have found a different and unexpected derivation of betweenness – one that emerges from the moment of *terror*. Perhaps due to the way the interviews were constructed, this derivation evolved through a response to betweenness in the creative practitioner’s chosen medium – this poem is Hay’s professional voice and, thus, it is fitting to find such apt response<sup>76</sup>.

The poem and the journey take a further turn, illuminating a pathway that slowly rebuilds from the supreme loss. “The stories [that] scaffold the void”, the “precious moments” must be grasped. Hay adds layers to his own becoming, woven through the place through which he journeys. According to his poem, not only may *between* become *betweenness* – “[t]here is shy purpose in the space between”, “I travel, quarantined in chrome and glass from the space between,/ but I see it studded with cultural markers/ known easily to the body” – but it is an essential component of the building. When considering the poem as a whole, it is evident that for Hay it is out of the between that betweenness arises. The terror of the between is a necessary precondition to time, space and place. In this regard, Hay is redeemed by the narky as its loud calls of love and social life give life to the other. The uncontrollable alienation of the poem’s early sections is shrugged off, and betweenness is attained.

Somewhat in contrast to Hay, landscape painter, Philip Wolfhagen suggested that his journey was definitely a between. Unlike Hay, Wolfhagen did not directly articulate any aspects of betweenness in his journey. He expressed disdain for the necessity of the journey in his daily routine and remorse for the landscape choices land managers have made to the town in which he lives. Wolfhagen states: “I think perhaps more about the politics of landscape when I am driving through it than I ever do when [I’m painting] ... I don’t think about the politics of landscape when I am painting” (Wolfhagen, in interview, 2010). Throughout our journey together, Wolfhagen spoke

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<sup>76</sup> Inhabiting the space at the side of the road myself (see Interlude: Animalia), I had skirted around it, but not realised the moment of pure terror as significant.

*only* of the politics of landscape. His paintings, however, are not explicitly political; they are more dreamy and languid (see figures 47-49).

For me though, these paintings make me passionate about place. They generate and drive feelings and emotions of topophilia. Wolfhagen states: “You can’t think about politics whilst you are doing that [making art / painting landscapes]. Others may be able to. Others wish to make those kinds of statements through their work but I never have and never will. I would never be very good at it” (in interview, 2010). Rather, Wolfhagen states,

I go into my own relationship with my paintings (whatever that is). I am not even really thinking about the landscape to be quite honest. In fact the landscape ... is circumstantial to my work. The work is about other psychological issues or my love of history, my love of music, my love of the world, to put it really simply, the natural world (in interview, 2010).

Rather than the intellectual and political thinking that Wolfhagen is forced to confront while journeying, when he enters his studio he enters another realm. His disposition shifts to accommodate his working practise. “I am much more an emotional person who reacts to things emotionally rather than intellectually. I think that that makes better artwork for me. When I approach anything from an intellectual position the work sort of looks a bit stiff and trite and just doesn’t sing – the magic is not there” (in interview, 2010).



Figure 47. Philip Wolfhagen, *Journey to the source II*, (2009a), oil and beeswax on linen, 118x96cm.



Figure 48. Philip Wolfhagen, *Study for 'The Journey' no.6*, (2009b), oil and beeswax on linen, 57x46cm.



Figure 49. Philip Wolfhagen, *View to the past* (2011), oil and beeswax on linen, 214.5x200.5cm

While he sees the political landscape on his everyday journey to his studio, Wolfhagen's paintings belie this fact, instead conveying diverse emotion and love. In terms of this research, the perspectives put forward by Wolfhagen demonstrate that the between space of his journey is able to orient the work space of his painting. While politically articulate in the world and carrying many frustrations and perseverances, Wolfhagen paints an emotional world, bereft of land management politics. Yet, somehow, those landscape politics are intimately entwined with the emotion in his paintings; they are in those paintings as what he has *left out*. Wolfhagen's paintings convey an *idea* of landscape, as Timms (2005, p. 12), in

regard to Wolfhagen's 'approach to landscape', states: "meaningful responses to nature arise not from feelings of awe and astonishment before breathtaking displays, but from knowledge, familiarity and introspection, from some kind of intimate personal engagement". The intimacy to which Timms refers is the movement between two places through which Wolfhagen is politically vocal – journeys that he thinks about and knows well. As Wolfhagen paints "an atmosphere of melancholy and loss, which captures the mood of our time" (Timms 2005, p. 12) he carries the unspoken landscape politics through painting what people choose to forget when making compassionless landscape choices. This is a politics of betweenness – made available to this research only via the journey through the between where we see how Wolfhagen comes to know and understand the places in which he journeys.

Like Hay, there is a tension, but in this case unresolved. In the case of Wolfhagen, betweenness is translated, transmogrified, transformed out of the between. Wolfhagen paints what he loves about the world, and while sometimes there are hints in his work of things not being quite in kilter, the way that they are painted carries the dreamy magic through. It seems as if you are in a state of hypnosis when looking at Wolfhagen's works. Is there something unkempt in the beauty, something hidden, and something that he doesn't want us to directly see; something perhaps that shapes us in our daydreams, fostering our own love of place that will in turn feed back into our land management politics? It is impossible to say: as Wolfhagen states, "I don't really want to analyse that too much because of course ... the magic might be gone" (in interview, 2010).

Betweenness and between may be found in the same place, depending on the aspect of that place to which one brings their attention. For visual artist, Julie Gough, the place through which we journeyed together was a powerful betweenness on many levels. A descendant of Tasmanian Aboriginal people, Gough explained that the beach we were walking along carried a deeper significance than might have been imagined. She states: "...it is so much about, for me, what happened in the old times which was basically... these women that were taken on boats" (Gough, in interview, 2010). Whale and seal hunters of the early settlement of Tasmania, travelling by



boat, captured many Aboriginal women and took them to rocky outcrops far from shore and left them there to hunt. The sealers would return every few weeks to collect the seals that the women had caught. Gough's research into the history and geography of the area led her to conclude that the place in which we walked is the place where the Aboriginal women were marooned after they were kidnapped. She describes the walk as a "point of departure" (in interview, 2010). This betweenness holds a significance that is intensely personal for Gough. She states: "I think it is where we started to get white, lacking our pigment pretty much. For me it is about this. I feel like this. I don't know if it was from here or from there, but it is from here [the broader surrounds]" (in interview, 2010). The significance of this moment of understanding provided by Gough – a record of her intimate connection to a particular place – is profound.

Gough reflects on her personal awareness and sensibility for the legacy of colonisation in her work. Her work seems to exude the emotion of the circumstances of colonisation in Tasmania and broader Australia. While some works appear to be directly confrontational – demanding recognition and broad-scale remorse, there is also a quiet sadness, a wistfulness that is difficult to pinpoint. Gough states of her relationship with her place, "[t]here is a sense of yearning for something but you don't know what it is because you can't ... it is not there anymore" (in interview, 2010). That is the sense that one gets from her work; something unknown, ungraspable, yet palpable. She adds that "some things have happened walking along here", and these are transformative things: "I generally think about all the missing people that were here. I don't want to get too gloomy but I do think about what I would be like if things hadn't happened the way they did here and that is a kind of bizarre thought – me black and naked here – a 'what if' feeling" (in interview, 2010).



Figure 50. Julie Gough, *Malahide* (2008), Fingal Valley coal necklace on dropped Northern Midlands antlers, 200x133x35cm.





Figure 51. Julie Gough, *Return* (2005), Abalone shell, manila rope, 30m circumference.



Figure 52. Julie Gough and Tony Thorne, *The missing* (midlands silhouettes 2011), plywood and steel, approximate installation: 287h x 420w x 16.5d cm.



Figure 53. Julie Gough, *Leeawuleena* (2001a), wood, wax, 347.5x49x7.5cm variable.



Figure 54. Julie Gough, *Traveller* (2013), HDMI video projection, 16:9, 8.43min, colour, sound, edited by Jemma Rea.



Figure 55. Julie Gough, '*Night Sky Journey*' and '*Tracking self*' (2001b), fine grained basalt and kelp, 300x400cm variable (installation).

Being in this place, experiencing this walk, has the potential to evoke an almost infinite sadness. Gough, however, feels rejuvenated and alive:

I imagine my journey as inhaling and exhaling, getting in the good air as I walk in that place and letting out the bad air from living away from that place. I imagine at the same time my feeling of excitement, coming to see my old friend, this place, and hoping it is well plus seeing what changes have happened, to the lagoon, to the middens drifting into the sea (in interview, 2010).

Even though there is richness beyond expression in Gough's experience of this place, there is also a deep politics of landscape – a between – that affects her in a compendium of ways; that is bound up with her passion for the walk. Gough asserts: “I also carry an increased anxiety as the journey progresses, culminating near the journey's end, hoping desperately not to see new footprints of eco-tourists at this special place from Ken Latona's Bay of Fires Invasive Walk, or even worse, to see these people in person” (in interview, 2010). The eco-tourist operator has been allowed to produce eco-shelters in the heart of the national park. The tourists walk short stints and are then housed in five star pseudo-camping accommodations. Gough conveys the emotional complexity of her journey: “Each of their tourist footprints here on this beach is one more between mine, my family's and my ancestors. So I imagine the walk between as a long span of breathing in and out, incorporating altogether my anxiety and excitement and belonging (in interview, 2010). The diverse compendium of works that Gough produces through her artistic practice also reflects this complexity; an anxious meditation for unresolved histories being lived as bodily experiences in the present. Gough sums this up eloquently:

Betweenness can be something you don't aim for, or expect, but you know it when you are there. Betweenness is when you give yourself up physically to uncontrollable events in space and time. The space of betweenness plays with your sense of time, purpose, ego and you become a willing hostage in something bigger than the immediate contemporary

world. Experiencing betweenness brings a pause to contemplate while almost stuck in having to fully experience a journey. Betweenness brings also a recognition of mortality, beauty, duration, the value of some things, and the futility of other things (in interview, 2010).

In this quote, Gough demonstrates the intertwining of *between* and *betweenness*. Once you have entered the realm of possibility, all betweenness carry the potential for interaction, interpretation and, thus, altering resonance (or betweenness). Not everything will be a betweenness to all people, and not many things will be a betweenness to one person, but people need to know that they can be, to some degree at least, in-charge of their betweenness and that, through the seeking of resonance with things, they have the capacity to alter the world, just as the world has the capacity to alter them, and that what is, what should be, does not have to be the way it is. And herein lies the beauty of betweenness – that, as a state of perception, as a capacity to be altered, place is always in a perpetual state of becoming, of what could be, if only we had thought of it yet, forever and ever, Amen.

### Concluding remarks

That ‘everything is between, but not everything is betweenness’ was a key finding of the study. Participant interviews revealed that between and betweenness are related terms, but carry significant differences. Indeed, betweenness as multiple betweenness is more than the sum of their parts. Not “between + between + between  $\neq$  betweenness”; rather, between is the space within which betweenness has the potential to occur. That does not mean that the relationship between *between* and *betweenness* is linear, rather, betweenness demonstrates a spatial relationship that is amorphous, indescribable and mobile. While between relies on some of the qualities of betweenness to be able to be used in communication – between is a common shorthand for things that are troublesome to describe – it stops short of the transformative qualities of betweenness.

Even though not all betweenness are betweenness, one (a person, place or thing) is always between. To be present in the face of betweenness is to experience a significant moment of affect, where a *thing* resonates with the interacting body. Some *things* are able to elicit this betweenness more than others, and some people are able to find betweenness in more places than others. The capacity to be affected varies depending upon one's perception and life experiences (see Chapter 3). The ramifications of betweenness are also dependent on perception, as some, creative professionals particularly, become masters at creating betweenness.

## Position 2: Drawing the betweenness

### Interpolations

In this section I interpolate a set of narratives and images that together give presence to the inchoate and sensate awareness that I refer to as betweenness. The variegated<sup>77</sup> technique that I have developed for this aspect of the research is to bring the voice of creative practitioners themselves into the story of betweenness<sup>78</sup> while continuing to allow my own thoughts and that of the literature to carry the argument through the chapter. In this sub-section, creative practitioners use words to describe their imagined drawing of betweenness<sup>79</sup>. In addition, however, I introduce a range of

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<sup>77</sup> The use of the term 'variegated' in this instance is to signify an approach that allows different aspects of my analytical reportage to remain discrete, not dissimilar to the colour patterns on a variegated rose (see in Figure 56).

<sup>78</sup> Artist's voices are the direct result of interviews and follow-up email communication between Tasmanian creative professionals and the author.

<sup>79</sup> Creative practitioners were asked: "If you could draw the betweenness in words, what would it look like". All creative practitioners responded with conventional sentence and paragraph based responses (rather than poetry or lists, for example). There were no restrictions placed on how the words might be presented.



artworks or, more specifically, works of creative practice<sup>80</sup>, that seek to contribute to an understanding of betweenness in a *drawn* way. Entering into this section on ‘drawing the betweenness’, it is important to note that “[d]rawing is an autobiographical record of one’s discovery of an event – seen, remembered or imagined” (Berger 2005, p. 4). The epistemological intent of the thesis is that the record, described by Berger, is visceral-cognate knowledge of a sensation that allows the reader to recognise betweenness when or if it is encountered again – it is as if betweenness were to be inscribed within.



Figure 56. *Variegated rose*, (Ross 2006).

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<sup>80</sup> The artworks in this chapter are referred to as works of creative practice because they are derived from a range of creative genres that are not generally referred to as artworks. For example, artworks are typically considered to be specifically works produced by visual artists (painters, installation artists, sound artists, sculptors, printmakers, photographers). In this research, however, the term *creative practice* has been used to expand the genre of visual arts. The term ‘works of creative practice’ has been used in place of the term *artworks* because it allows a more conceptually nuanced appraisal of betweenness and, thus, for betweenness to be given presence in a more comprehensive way. ‘Works of creative practice’ include television series, film, fiction, musical composition, dance and street art, for example. It does not include craft, *per se*, unless that craft is interdisciplinary and seeking to engage within the range of art.

At one level, these works of creative practice evoke a sense of betweenness in and of themselves as they affect the reader in an indescribable way. The works selected each convey a sense of betweenness as I personally have experienced it, and while that is not to say that the reader will experience the same awareness, the reader may at least acknowledge that such response is possible. Each work presented will be a representation of the *actual* work that hangs in a gallery (or sits in a park, field, or on a shelf, or is played on a screen or in a concert hall). As a representation of the original (a copy of some kind) each work will be operating at a textual level, as the work must be translated to thoughts (through a process of recognising it as a copy) before it may be cognitively processed. It is the process of translation that generates slippage, and within that slippage comes an opportunity for betweenness.

At another level, however, it is the space that is created *between* the words (my thoughts, the literature, the voices of creative practitioners) and the works of creative practice that aims to give further presence to betweenness. As representations of works of creative practice, those selected are party to all manner of interpretations; the significant thing in this instance, however, is that the slippage that occurs through the use of the representations is a good thing! Or at the very least, not a bad thing. Whether the reader interprets betweenness through the representations of the works, or through the process of remembering the betweenness from experiencing those works in the flesh, is inconsequential. The most important thing is that the reader is able to see whether the aims of the thesis have been met. As mentioned on page 30, the reader will be offered the opportunity to draw their personal response to the work later in the thesis<sup>81</sup>.

The process of drawing (in one's mind) as a way of making marks while interrogating a subject may offer some insights into the possible formlessness of betweenness, and may allow the thesis to do what it says can be done – to perform,

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<sup>81</sup> Interviewees were also given the opportunity to *draw* betweenness, though it was not specified for interviewees whether they should use words or to draw a drawing. All bar one used words. The interviewees' words provide the basis for the following interpolative section.



demonstrate, execute, present, give presence to ‘betweenness’ while not representing it *per se*. As the reader absorbs the words on these pages, it is hoped that something will begin to form – an image, form, shade, line, contour, embellishment, contours, patterns, marks, scratches, dots, hatches, dark, light and in-between. It is hoped that the reader will enter the next phase of writing with a trace already inscribed of what has come before, and an openness to what is to come.

It might have been preferable if creative practitioners had been given the opportunity to make a drawing (in the ilk of betweenness) for this thesis. Indeed, writing on Vincent van Gogh, Berger (2005, p. 13) suggests that “[t]he ideal project would be to draw the process of his drawing, to borrow his drawing hand”. Berger adds, with some ruefulness, “[n]evertheless I will try with words” (2005, p. 13). In the present circumstance, however, I would suggest that drawing with words provides cogent opportunities to extend the spatiality of the drawing to encompass the delicate qualities of betweenness.

That said, there is also an opportunity here to extend the playfulness of the between. This sense of playfulness (previously discussed on page 56) allows scope for creative engagement. Given that this thesis arose through my personal chase for *something akin to blue*, it is appropriate here to consider the nature of representation in a loosely linked way. With the aim of developing the argument that betweenness is about perception, interpretation and understanding; that there is always slippage in representation; that I was chasing something akin to blue; that creative practitioners not only understand this but actively work with and develop this understanding every day of their practising lives, I respond to the words of creative practitioners with representations of works by other creative practitioners. The works selected seek to activate the space between my chase and their words; between my perception (and representations) of betweenness and those of the participants of this study. It is expected that a depth of engagement, a richness, will thereby be added to the notion of betweenness.

Betweenness is everywhere. But the way we see the world shapes how it appears to us. Betweenness is elusive and difficult to grasp. It is always just at the edge of what you can see. Always at the edge, betweenness draws you in at the same time as pushing you away. Betweenness is loaded with what is yet to become. Betweenness is everywhere, but the way it is perceived is different for everyone. How do creative practitioners describe betweenness in and of itself? Given the most basic of mediums, a pencil, participants were asked to draw or map betweenness in words. The qualities of betweenness to which this thesis seeks to give presence are drawn by participants. Each drawing of betweenness is different, each is unique, yet each presents shared qualities of betweenness. None represent definitive meaning; each portrays a glimpse, a trace, a moment of understanding.

### Here-ness

A belief is that which a person just ‘knows’. Many people believe there is a God; that the sun will rise in the sky tomorrow; that the apples they buy and eat from the supermarket will not put them to eternal sleep. Knowing things makes life easier and more efficient; it removes the need for questioning, saving time and energy by decreasing worry and stress. Trust and belief are, indeed, essential to a functioning society. The capacity to question, however, is an important aspect of life. Knowing things is a double-edged sword, because when things are known, they are more difficult to question and, indeed, less likely to be questioned. People have different beliefs and while beliefs can change, most people find it easier and safer to interact with others who share their beliefs. The role of the congregation is, indeed, to bring like minds together.

The capacity to shape our beliefs is re-presented with every evolving circumstance. Our opportunity to access this as a re-presentation is determined by how open we are at any given moment. When asked to draw betweenness in words, visual artist, Denise Ava Robinson said: “[f]or me 'betweenness' would be a 'dot' or 'mark' that represents where I am right here and now. ...I can visually represent it with a mark... One mark - in an open space... I see this as a soft diffused mark” (Robinson, in

interview, 2010). Even though Robinson's actual location is always shifting, there is something that remains constant, her perceptive and interpretive self within the moment of the present; one mark, soft and diffused, constant.

Perception is integral to the evolving moment of the here and now. Perception can only occur in the moment. It is possible to remember a perception from the past, or imagine a perception of the future, but evaluation, translation and judgement occur in the moment. While it sounds obvious, this is an idea that has surged in popularity in recent years as people grappling with the pressures of everyday life turn to religious and philosophical solutions. It is suggested by Tolle (2004, p. 30, emphasis in original) that people should “[r]ealize deeply that the present moment is all you have. Make the NOW the primary focus of your life”. Tolle also places emphasis on the role of perception in making sense of and interacting in any given situation. He states: “The primary cause of unhappiness is never the situation but your thoughts about it. Be aware of the thoughts you are thinking. Separate them from the situation, which is always neutral, which always is as it is” (Tolle 2005, p. 96). The power inherent within the moment of now is given extra significance for those struggling to process the anxieties of past traumas or future hopelessness, as focusing one's mental energies on the present can help to alleviate those past/future stresses.

Perhaps Tolle's insistence on the NOW as the extent of all that was and all that may be is overstated. Perhaps the past and future offer possibilities that are activated through a sense of openness to the present. Robinson, too, contextualises her present with the world around and this is explicit in her art. She spoke of:

... a light centre approx 5mm with narrowing band of shading to dark – only 2mm then fading back out to an approximate 15-30mm fading (shaded) line again – surrounded by whiteness at the edge of the whiteness – approximate 90-100mm, I can visualise the faintest pink soft diffused line with another whiteness beyond suggest an infinite expanse (in interview, 2010).

Painterly, yet infinite at its edges; the use of mathematical measurement demonstrates that Robinson wants us to know the exact proportions of the drawing. The relationship between mathematics and art, particularly music, has long been seen as significant. Robinson tries to provide the secrets of this betweenness to help us to both visualise the drawing and to reveal its mysteries. That the colours shift from pink to dark to white suggests that betweenness for Robinson is safe; it is open, and infinite, yet bounded and formed... betweenness is containable, if only for a moment, and only in one's mind.

This word drawing by Robinson brings to mind Mark Rothko's painting, *Ochre and Red on Red* (1954). In this reproduction, itself a photograph of a painting displayed on a website, the painting carries certain qualities that give depth, adding to the value of the betweenness that is given presence. As a reproduction it nicely blends with the qualities of betweenness. The white shape at the left is quite possibly the reflection of light from a flash or the lights in the room. This does not bother me. In fact, this adds to the appeal of the image.



Figure 57. Mark Rothko, *Ochre and Red on Red* (1954), oil on canvas 229 x175cm.

Rothko's painting *Ochre and Red on Red* (1954) and Robinson's drawing both speak of a tamed abstraction and an untamed precision. As Robinson journeys, she carries her here-ness with her as a soft and diffuse mobile mark that is measured and measuring; striving for something unknown and perhaps unknowable. This bringing together of Robinson, Rothko, the writer and the reader, is, at the moment of reading, a powerful one – a moment of here-ness that will be perpetuated with every reading body. It is a moment of here-ness that enhances the capacity of the thesis to do what it says can be done.

## Contemplation

For poet, Lyn Reeves (in interview, 2010), a drawing of betweenness would “invite contemplation and evoke a sense of calm and stillness”; it would show multiple perspectives and vantage points that are not necessarily present in the surrounding landscape. She says: “[f]or me a drawing of betweenness would be a clear, open area with a large sense of space. It would encompass distant horizons and close-up, intricate detail. It would have reflective surfaces, fluctuations of light and colour-fraying edges” (in interview, 2010).

The notion of contemplation has already been discussed on several occasions through the thesis<sup>82</sup>. As we have seen, contemplation is an activity that involves careful observation and prolonged thought. Contemplating the space between the earth and the sky is a place I long to be. In effect, contemplation is a kind of long-term perception. Perception can be instantaneous, and people make judgements about the situations they are in at every moment. But to stop and give one’s undivided conscious attention to something for an extended period of time takes perception to another level, a different place. Contemplation at its most concentrated can involve giving over your sense of self to the existential moment; a sensual experience that transports and transforms.

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<sup>82</sup> See Chapters 3 and 4.





Figure 58. Richard Long. *A Line in Japan, Mt Fuji* (1979), colour on paper, 862x1218.



Figure 59. Richard Long. *A Line in Japan, Mt Fuji* (1979), colour on paper, 862x1218.

This work by Richard Long entitled *A Line in Japan* (1979) demonstrates the qualities identified by Reeves: intricate details, reflective surfaces and frayed edges (see Figures 58 and 59). In terms of the fluctuations of light and colour one needs to contemplate both photographs. As this sculpture was performative and involved Long making the line with rocks over a period of time, it is possible to imagine the sequences of events and changes in light and colour as the performance evolved.

Contemplation also comes through a sense of connection with particular places and the heightened awareness that comes through a sense of significance. A work that carries such sensitivity (for me) is shown in Figure 60.



Figure 60. Ana Pollak. *River Sky* (2008), graphite on paper, mounted onto canvas, 104x204cm framed behind glass.

This work is a drawing of a place on the Hawkesbury River, where my partner, three children and I have a little shack to which we hope to return one day. The Hawkesbury River and its precincts largely missed the development waves that came to Sydney and its surrounds. It has always been a place of otherness, more remote, less predictable and less knowable. That said, many, many generations of Aboriginal people and, now, people of European provenance have made it their home.



This image, with its distance and foreground, its sense of space and reflections of light, inspires me to contemplate. It also forms a point of connection between the drawing by Reeves and my own imaginary and contemplative state and place. Contemplation is a tool of betweenness; to contemplate is to consider possibilities and thus access new ways of knowing.

### Betweenness as a liminal state

A liminal state is characterised as a state of between; a state of transition. Indeed, visual artist, Brigita Ozolins (in interview, 2010) describes betweenness as “... a strange liminal state”. The strangeness of this liminal state is where the world is ‘as it is encountered’. An example:

It is January and the middle of summer, and yesterday the day felt and looked like what we know to be summer – warm or hot, so we went swimming and got sunburnt. Today, however, even though we know it is summer, it is snowing, we have a fire going and we are wearing woolly jumpers.

This example reminds us that ‘summer’ is part of a *system* of yearly seasons that human beings superimpose over the top of the endless rollout of days and nights (Olwig 2005). The way that people know that they can control the world, or at least gain a sense of cognitive security, is to overwrite what are essentially liminal daily realities, where one thing bleeds into the next, with superimposed, quantitative systems of management (Olwig 2005). The ‘liminality of place’, if we may refer to it as that, might be thought of as the actual place that exists *underneath* human epistemologies. According to Olwig (2005), the liminality of place refers to how we weigh up and put together any number of variables in order to perform our daily activities – choosing to sow seed, given the fluctuations in weather events, for example. One wonders if it is possible to tease the liminality and the systems apart in writing, though we perform this activity on a daily basis without much thought. The origins of the term ‘liminal’ may offer some insight.

There is a significant etymological relationship between the liminal, to which Ozolins refers, and the capacity of people to gather and store grain for the winter. According to Klein (1971, p. 422), the term *liminal* is “[pertaining to or at the limen](#)”. ‘Limen’ is Latin for the term *threshold*, which, in turn, has its origins in the ancient practice of threshing wheat. The practice of separating the wheat grain from husk was known to occur in large timber buildings that had an opening on either side of the central area (see Figure 61).



Figure 61. W.H von Hohberg, *Dreschen des Getreides und Verpacken der Körner in Säcke* (1695) (*Threshing and bagging grain in Germany*) copper engraving on paper, 10.6x14.4cm.

When the grain was threshed, the two openings adjacent to each other allowed the passage of breeze which carried away the husk while the grain fell to the floor. The sill that kept the grain from spilling outside the barn was the ‘thresh hold’.

The 'lintel', which is the flat horizontal cross piece that spans the space between two supports, frames the top section of a door-way. The lintel above the door demarcates the space between inside and outside, through which one passes on entering or leaving a building and, thus, provides the infrastructure of the threshold (See Figure 62). In the space under the lintel one cannot be said to be either inside or outside, but somewhere in between: the liminal zone.



Figure 62. Lintel and discharging arch, minaret of the Great Mosque of Kairouan, Tunisia (Hepburn 2010).

Going back to the building where the threshing of the wheat took place, the space of the lintel was extended such that the back door and the front door of the building met in the middle – the liminal zone became the space between the two openings. The extension of this liminal space created the possibility of the threshold.

There is an etymological relationship between lintel, liminal and sublime. According to Klein (1971) the term 'sublime' derives from '*sub*', coming up to '*limen*', the space below the lintel. To be in the presence of the sublime was to experience

something “of very great excellence or beauty... Producing an overwhelming sense of awe or other high emotion through being vast or grand” (OED 2010). In the times of harvest and threshing of the wheat, to procure capacity to feed your family and community through the long cold winter from the harvested and stored grain, may indeed be generative of feelings of awe and sublime. Many cultures today may still experience this sensation from the capacity to survive the winter through their own ingenuity and labour.

Such feelings however, need not be reduced to agrarian lifestyles. Indeed, if I could manage to sow, grow, reap and thresh a winter’s supply of wheat today, I would be unquestionably in a state of awe. It seems less awe-some to go to the supermarket to buy some pasta. But perhaps this mundane activity should evoke awe. After all, having the capacity to buy pasta indicates that my community has mastered the skill to grow grain for millions of people, turn the grain to pasta and transport it from the other side of the world to my supermarket, to which I have been able to transport myself with the money and the social skills and knowledge to make the transaction possible. Perhaps, then, I *should* be in awe at such developments.

Perhaps, however, the sublime has always been in the everyday wonders of survival. Indeed, the writing of first century rhetorician, Longinus, in his seminal work, *On the Sublime*, argues that it is *known experience* – meaning that which is practised on a daily basis which in turn leads to survival – that is responsible for the sense of awe. As time moved on, technology developed and everyday life achieved a sense of basic security from the threats inherent to the seasons and the elements, (and it became not such a surprise that communities survived each year), perhaps representation evolved to capture the *extraordinary* beyond the everyday.

Betweenness is not the same as the sublime, the threshold, or the liminal zone, but a ‘state of the liminal’ as referred to by Ozolins is useful in developing our drawing of betweenness. Ozolins states that betweenness could be represented in two different ways: “My first and immediate reaction is to see it as a thick and velvety fog that’s grey and smokey and difficult to negotiate, like being inside a huge fluffy rain cloud.



It's three-dimensional and it has no borders or limits – it goes on forever” (in interview, 2010). In this image, Ozolins is inside the image – the fog. The fog presented is a three-dimensional space that is navigable, albeit with difficulty. In Ozolins' drawing, the space of the betweenness, or the “strange liminal space” (in interview, 2010) is without bounds, though one cannot navigate beyond a few feet in front. In terms of the threshold, according to Malpas (2008, no page given), “[e]very threshold is placed at an edge, and yet not merely an edge, for the threshold always carries with it a sense of opening up toward or closing away from”. In this regard, simply moving creates the space of the threshold; all you really need is the space a few feet ahead and space that shows where you have been.

But the site to which Ozolins refers might, in the case of the everyday world, be better regarded as the sense or sensibility for the threshold as a liminal space. This being the case, the threshold opens to incorporate perceived and imagined worlds. The perceived world carries potential for what one is open to in terms of what is known. For example, driving my line of road, getting out of the car, touching animals that are dead, pondering past tracks buried under the tar, past lives, past ways of being in the world; these are all things that further my sense of what is possible.

Malpas (2008, no page given) argues that:

Only that place at the edge that anticipates or remembers can constitute a threshold. The threshold thus is not a place in which one can remain – to do so is for it to cease to be a threshold – but is always a place of movement and transition. Indeed, one might say that the threshold is the coalescence of a time into the form of a place, since the threshold only appears as a threshold in that time of opening-toward or closing-away-from. The being of the threshold as a place is therefore essentially determined by the event of approach or withdrawal, anticipation or remembrance, arrival or departure, coming-to-be or passing away.

The threshold becomes a site of approach and departure combined with anticipation and remembrance and, thus, movement and contemplation. The threshold is a site of the *between*. But how does this appear in the world? Heidegger (1971) argues that it is through the process of *building* that dwelling comes into play. Dwelling, as an engaged form of living, is about taking contemplation and action and bringing them into the everyday. This idea takes Longinus' 'sublime' and Heidegger's 'dwelling', puts them on a journey into the everyday and, thus, creates a sense of what is referred to here as the betweenness of place.

There is a sense of awe, too, at great works of architecture, particularly architecture that resonates with the potential and actuality of very real power.

When JMW Turner painted *The Burning of the Houses of Parliament, from the River*, which he witnessed in 1834, he conveyed a sense of the space between the miracles of governance and power and what such organisation and order facilitates, but also of the restrictions that it places on what is possible – and many people jeered at the time. When that building burned to the ground, a new space was created. The painting by Turner, one of several on the same topic, demonstrates the smoky, infinite space to which Ozolins refers, but also the sense of being between, with the contemplation of and potential for other ways of governing becoming apparent. It is nature being irreverent.



Figure 63. J.M.W Turner. *The Burning of the Houses of Parliament, from the River* (1834), watercolour on paper, 23.2 x 32.5cm.

This project has its origins in a personal experience of architecture through which my perception and understanding were transformed. The location for this experience was the home of Karen Lambert and Richard Leplastrier at Lovett Bay, New South Wales. The Lambert-Leplastrier home set on the edge of a national park, is a single-room, timber dwelling that does not use glass as a building material (Leplastrier 2004). The building is set at a height in the landscape that allows a natural bench for seating and thus a point and place of reflection. The western face of the building remains open to the landscape and elements for most of the year.



Figure 64. Richard Leplastrier, *Lovett Bay House*, Sydney (1994a).

While the sizes and shapes of doorways and entrances have varied through time, the standard Australian door is 800 mm wide; at Lovett Bay house the architectural frame of the doorway has been expanded laterally through its width and depth. The lintel (the threshold) has a width and depth of several metres, and thus amplifies the site of dwelling, threshold, potential and betweenness. While this may seem a simple modification to a home, in this case it has given objects, participants and their interactions a somewhat *extraordinary* quality.



Figure 65. Richard Leplastrier, *Lovett Bay House*, Sydney (1994b) .



There is an unusual and particular sensibility at the Lovett Bay house. Things seem to unfold more here than anywhere else I have been. The significance of the experience of being at Lovett Bay house may stem from the way the house encompasses dwelling, while simultaneously extending and opening it to further possibilities. The eaves of the overhanging roof ‘withhold’ in order to provide protection from the conditions of the sun, wind and rain, while the extension of the living spaces pushes you out to the elements. You dwell in the space where the elements are just sufficiently far away not to make you seriously uncomfortable, but close enough for them to be experienced in their raw form. One finds oneself between inside and outside, being both embraced and extended at the site of the threshold. The expansive dimensionality of the space – of the threshold – leaves one with a sense of the betweenness.



Figure 66. Richard Leplastrier, *Lovett Bay House*, Sydney (1994a).

Somewhere between inside and outside this home an expanded threshold both nurtures and extends the self. This is my favourite place in the world to *be*, and I both look for it and carry it with me deep inside, everywhere I go.

The second rendering of betweenness provided by Ozolins is also a state of the liminal, but, unlike fog, here there is more a sense of being able to carry it with you:

The second picture that comes to mind is also grey, but it has more substance. It's an enormous but very delicate scribble made up of thousands of meandering lines that cross all over each other like a giant tangle of spider web. But the tangle is not made up of separate lines – it's one continuous thread that has no beginning or end. Unlike the fog, it has a vague sense of finitude and is shaped roughly like a vast round ball. The edges of this ball are very difficult to determine and are made of finely looped and erratic, sprawling lines (in interview, 2010).

Even though you may have the sense of being able to carry it with you, betweenness becomes something less attainable in this drawing; it is so complex and impenetrable that it is more something that one might try to unravel inside one's own self: a knot of sorts. How does one begin to unravel who one is – where one starts or stops? A metaphor for life perhaps – a tangled line that all you can hope to do is grab hold for as long as you can, carried along by something big and uncontrollable, reflecting on your small length of the tangle as best you can, before letting go again. For me this brought to mind a few different works. The first is *Mr. Messy*, the 8<sup>th</sup> book in the Mr. Men series by Roger Hargreaves ([1972] 2011). Mr. Messy, shown below, is pink and made of a squiggly line and has been a significant member of the Mr. Men series.

# MR. MESSY

by Roger Hargreaves



Figure 67. Roger Hargreaves, *Mr. Messy* ([1972] 2011). Children's book.

Like all of the Mr. Men, Mr. Messy does not seem to have a hope of changing, as who he is, is how he is and vice versa. That said, though, I have always thought of each member of the Mr. Men series to be a small part of a whole person, Roger Hargreaves most likely, but all of us as well. We may strive to be one thing in particular – how we would like to be known – but are actually a compendium of responses to individual circumstances and multiple, ever-changing variables.



Figure 68. Tom Friedman, *The Loop*, 1995, spaghetti, diameter 30.5cm (Hainley et al. 2001).

In this work by Friedman, all the strands from a packet of spaghetti have been cooked, dried and finally connected from one end to the next. The first piece connects to the last to form a continuous loop (see Hainley *et al.* 2001). This tangle exemplifies the playfulness and potentiality of betweenness. There are qualities to this work that make me smile.

Betweenness as a liminal state is able to be found in all facets of life, past, present and future; it is in what people *do* between, how they *live* between and who they *are* between. Whether betweenness is portrayed as a velvety fog or thousands of meandering lines, the site of between is always a liminal state, at the threshold of the next moment. The capacity to be altered, however, in one's perception of the everyday world is *shape-able*. Being alert and open to the (potentially awe-some) everyday, but most importantly, by thinking critically about and engaging with the world in ways that accommodate *practice* as a site of possibility – as an expanded threshold – not only leads to the capacity to be altered, but also *to* alter.

## The void

The betweenness for Marcus Tatton (in interview, 2010) is a twofold rendering of the void. He states:

I would draw fielded panels of marks to represent voluminous space. The marks are the defining key to knowing the void between the marks. Betweenness need[s] to be represented by a void... that's why I use TV as an example! By making marks that are many ...non-descript on a page, the sense of space can be accessed better than with complex renderings of matter.

The void that Tatton refers to is the empty timelessness of television. Tatton makes reference to the hours of a person's life that television is able to consume. In turn, this timeless void is associated with the existential emptiness at the heart of things. Television, like the internet, gulps buckets of time that slip through one's perception like sand.

You may sense, late at night, a shift in the patterns on your eyes. Awoken with no idea of the time, or the place, you see moving dots of bright light. Disoriented and confused, you may be confronted with that moment of panic: Where am I? What's happening? Is time still moving? The extended moment of perpetual nothingness, of utter emptiness sparks the perplexing combination of fear and pure wonder. This harks back to Hay's poem 'The Space Between' where the void marks the moment of pure terror; in this case, not the narky, but when the sleeper wakes suddenly to complete dissolution of reality, where meaning is lost.

Tatton's description of betweenness refers to "fielded panels of marks"; it is here that an analogy with television snow, or white noise, becomes apparent. 'Snow' is the image on a now old fashioned analogue television screen after broadcasting has ceased and there is no transmission signal reaching the screen, though the screen is still on. Snow usually commences late at night and, hence, people have been known



to fall asleep watching a program and wake up hours later to see the black and white dots jittering around the screen. On waking people become disoriented by the light moving spaces and the dark moving shapes and the question is prompted as to whether this signals the end of time, that aliens have taken over the planet, or, it is just 2am and you have woken up in the chair. What it means is that the disorientation creates a space of possibility.



Figure 69. *Television snow*, (Dugan 2011).

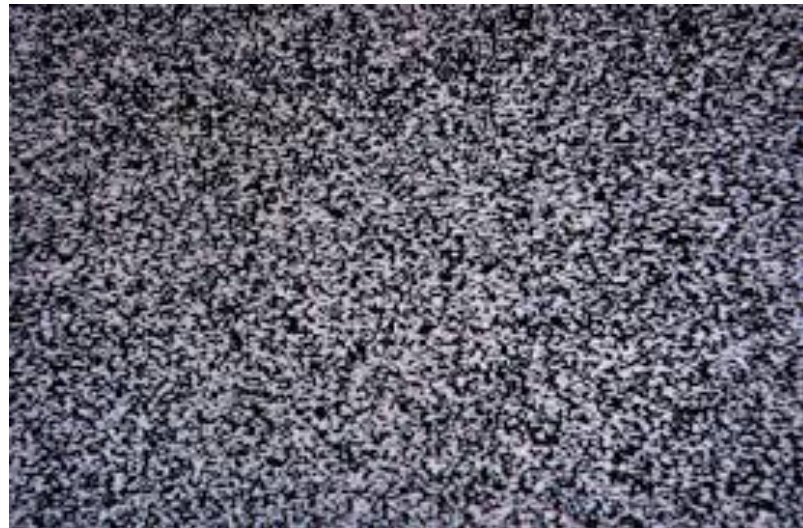


Figure 70. *Television snow (detail)* (Nesbit 2012).



Figure 71. *Image of the night sky* (Bgfons 2014).

I am reminded of Aboriginal stories where stars are thought to be campfires of the spirit world and that the spaces between the stars become as, or more significant than the stars themselves (Steffens 2009). The Milky Way provides a stand-out feature. In Western culture stars are seen as twinkling, a series of beliefs perpetuated by fairy tales and twilight songs. The poem by Jane Taylor (in Taylor and Taylor 1824, p. 10) entitled *The Star*, I have quoted from memory.

Twinkle, twinkle little star,  
How I wonder what you are!  
Up above the world so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky.  
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder what you are.

The notion that the “little star” is a diamond in the sky adds value and poignancy to the sparkly lights in the blackness of night. The fact that many now believe those

small sparkly campfires of the dead and small pieces of precious stone to be huge balls of exploding helium and hydrogen – not unlike our sun – illuminates the role of perception in determining the dominant reality. If the words ‘twinkle twinkle little star’ were changed to ‘like a *void* in the sky’ the nature of the star would be altered.

Perceiving the spaces between the stars as significant is different to seeing the stars as holes through which things can move; as diamonds or balls of exploding helium and hydrogen. In fact, a void almost suggests that if you go to sleep you might get sucked through the hole in the sky, or worse, that giant worms are likely to squirm through and eat you in your sleep. The space between the stars, seemingly infinite in depth, is a profound space of possibility.



Figure 72. Cy Twombly, *Untitled* (1970), Oil based house paint and crayon on canvas, 406x640.3.

Other artists, too, have worked extensively with mark making. In the above image by Cy Twombly, it is possible to see the relationship between marks and spaces and



how they need each other to become apparent. Indeed, the spaces between are as significant as the marks. This painting has the appearance of a camera moved while photographing the stars.

Betweenness as the void, or space between the marks, inverts the dominant tendency to see marks (or things) as being the noteworthy component of any compendium or circumstance. Giving thought to those spaces between provides the capacity to shift ones perspective, even for a moment, to things outside of the dominant ways of knowing. Shifting that focus is a significant act of opening of one's perception and links to betweenness are forged and accessed.

## Portal

For Julie Gough, *drawing* betweenness shows an interactive landscape. Gough constructs a drawing of a space that can change you, alter you, perceptually and physically. This perceptual shift, however, is one that can allow you to perceive your own body as elsewhere and otherwise. In her drawing, one enters the image in a space between two rocks and things start to change. She states: “[I would draw portals/doorways of rocks you walk through/between. There is a moment inside the portal which is betweenness](#)” (Gough, in interview, 2010). The portal, more fleeting and tenuous and less secure than the solidity of a threshold, takes the concept of betweenness even further than previously discussed, into a *lived* yet imaginary realm and ‘other world’.

Sometimes, when you least expect it, perception of space and time undergoes a slippage that is unaccountable. While driving, I can suddenly realise that I have arrived somewhere but have no recollection of how I got there or where I have just been. Having spoken to other people, it seems that this is not uncommon. However, it can be quite scary. I try to minimise its occurrence by making sure I am present! For Gough, however, this transformation/transportation occurs beyond her control – the result being that she experiences things, times and places outside of her known world. “[It is where anything is possible including coming through as another being,](#)

and/or at another time, but at the same place. I have twice knowingly been to such places, and lost time, and external physical reality, about purposefulness/sense of modern identity, at both” (in interview, 2010). I know of the experiences to which Gough is referring; I spent much time in this space as a child. My experience of such worlds was total and uncompromising; when I was in the realm I was lost to it, absorbed so deeply. Since becoming a parent myself, I have not been so fortunate. Perhaps, now, my greatest opportunity comes through the writing process, where time seems to slip as I lose myself in my thoughts as text.

Such worlds are understood by people more generally and are experimented with in many genres of creative practice. In the cult science fiction television series, *Doctor Who* (for example), the lead character of the same name relies upon a teleporting device to move between times and places (see Figure 73). On crossing the threshold of the ‘Tardis’, Doctor Who enters a new space that appears much larger on the inside than it looks on the outside (though the *actual* dimensions were never revealed in the television series). The ‘Tardis’ was then able to transport Doctor Who and various other characters around the solar system and beyond into fictional worlds, worlds contained only by the writers’ imaginations.



Figure 73. The Tardis from Dr Who (Tardis Builders)

Gough states: “A drawing could show a physical place/space you can enter and not be the same after walking through this” (in interview, 2010). In a sense, with every frame that one walks through one is not subsequently the same, but the degree to which this occurs is more accentuated in Gough’s example. Stepping into the Tardis to find one’s self fighting with Daleks is an example of such physical transformation.

The transformations discussed to date have been imagined, but they may also be real, and experienced as such. The unfolding of one's own life, for example, involves a continual passage through portals – passing from a given phase in one's life to the next. The birth of a child, the submission of a thesis, the death of a loved one are all examples of such portals; where things have changed, altered irreversibly after they have passed. Some artworks or profound experiences offer the same potential.

In his installation, entitled *Breathing Light* (2013), James Turrell provides a space that suggests that you might enter and never wish to leave, or be able to leave. With his seductive use of colour Turrell invites the viewer to move ever deeper into the space, as if the rectangular form at the end is a portal to a space of pure bliss.



Figure 74. James Turrell. *Breathing Light* (2013), LED light into space, dimensions variable.

A further example is provided in the work by Anish Kapoor entitled *Memory*, 2008. In this work a rusty, bulbous, cocoon-shaped form is placed in the gallery, such that

the viewer is never able to see the entire work at one time. The artist is making the viewer rely on memory to piece together the various perspectives.



Figure 75. Anish Kapoor, *Memory* (2008).

One of the views, however, shown in Figure 76 is a small room into which the viewer enters. I was fortunate enough to be alone in this section of the exhibition. On entering the already darkened space, one puts their face behind a dark velvety curtain. Behind this curtain one has the awareness of a voluminous space, but no idea of its dimensions or materials as the space is entirely matt black. The space feels cold, and with absolutely no light the sound conveyed a sense of the infinite. The work provided a totally unknowable, inky, deep blackness that gave the impression of somewhere into which you might be compelled to enter, but from which you may not return. It was, as an experience, entirely mysterious.

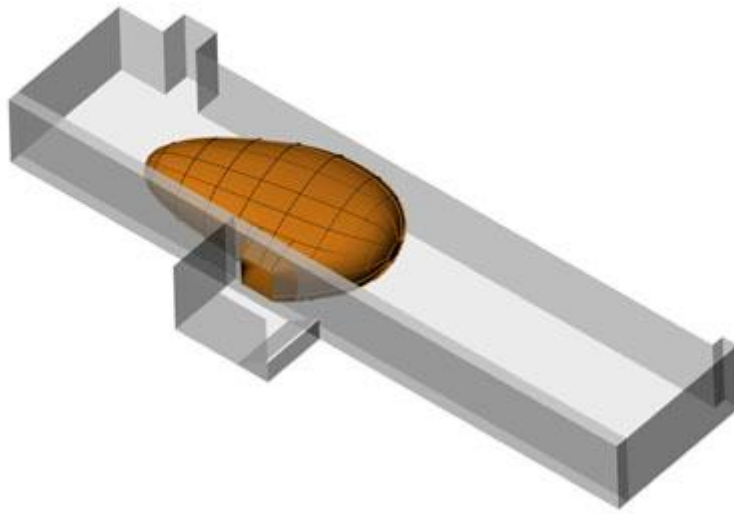


Figure 76. Anish Kapoor, *Memory* (2008), computer generated installation view.

In other cases, you may simply wish for it to be so! That you may go to places that exist so clearly in your mind's eye. A further demonstration of a portal comes from the writer J.K Rowling in her famous text, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. In this novel, the young Potter on his first trip to boarding school for witches and wizards is required to board the train on Platform Nine and a Half. The way that this is done is rather like magic. As the following conversation between the young Potter and the caring Mrs. Weasley shows, sometimes it is all a state of mind.

‘The thing is – the thing is, I don’t know how to – ’

‘How to get on to the platform?’ she said kindly, and Harry nodded.

‘Not to worry,’ she said. ‘All you have to do is walk straight at the barrier between platforms nine and ten. Don’t stop and don’t be scared you’ll crash into it, that’s very important. Best do it at a bit of a run if you’re nervous. Go on, go now before Ron.’

Er – OK,’ said Harry.

He pushed his trolley round and stared at the barrier. It looked very solid.

He started to walk towards it. People jostled him on their way to platforms nine and ten. Harry walked more quickly. He was going to smash right into that ticket box and then he'd be in trouble – leaning forward on his trolley he broke into a heavy run – the barrier was coming nearer and nearer – he wouldn't be able to stop – the trolley was out of control – he was a foot away – he closed his eyes ready for the crash –

It didn't come... he kept on running ... he opened his eyes.

A scarlet steam engine was waiting next to a platform packed with people. A sign overhead said *Hogwarts Express*, 11 o'clock. Harry looked behind him and saw a wrought-iron archway where the ticket box had been, with the words *Platform Nine and Three Quarters* on it. He had done it" (Rowling 1997, pp. 70-71).

### Concluding remarks

A second significant finding of this research was that betweenness may be drawn as a means to communicating its presence. In this section drawings-in-words were constructed (by research participants via email) to convey the space of betweenness. I then matched those word-drawings to examples of artworks which demonstrated the drawn betweenness. The betweenness did not necessarily lodge in the word drawings themselves (though it may have) but in the relationship between the word drawings and the things that were inspired in me as a result of reading and synthesizing the word-drawings. Key words, selected from individual word drawings – here-ness, contemplation, liminal state, void and portal – were identified as categories. Each key word resonated in terms of betweenness. Thus, it became apparent that art works that carried those attributes and qualities would further add to the drawing of betweenness.



The process of stretching meaning through representation, and simultaneously stretching representation through meaning, meant that new forms of creative experience were generated through the interpolation and subsequent extension of participants' word-drawings. This was performed by taking the inspiration that those word-drawings evoked (in me), in the form of creative works related to the word-drawings, which was then applied back to the reader (through the text and images), to help them see the drawing of betweenness. This technique was developed to extend the intellectual notion that betweenness may be drawn. More importantly, however, it was used as a device to imbue the reader with an awareness of betweenness through the interpolation process and its resulting presence.

Betweenness is conveyed through a mechanism of giving presence rather than representation. The slippage that is given the potential to develop through the application of several variables (word-drawings, art works of my selection and the accompanying text) assists in the process of *drawing* as a means to communicate betweenness and, in addition, provides a further step in the process of allowing the thesis to do what it says can be done. It is important to note that what has been drawn is only located in your mind – not on the page – and, thus, betweenness has been given presence, but not represented *per se*.

## **Position 3: Belonging in between**

### **The perceiving body**

Moving through landscape reveals the presence of *things*. Indeed, the most noteworthy characteristic of movement through the landscape is a constant stream of *things*, both familiar and unexpected, that become present in one's immediate vicinity. Such *things* are what we know as *real* things; they have a physical dimension, such that when they are encountered they may be touched and felt and they may be seen, recognised and named. These real things include such



configurations as the “swing”, “old jetty”, “little dinghy”, “little green area”, “she-oaks”, “little rocky outcrop”, “old Aboriginal midden”, “scraggly bush”, “lagoon”, “track”, “grazing cattle”, “poppies”, “potatoes”, “crop duster”, “clouds”, “snow”, “mountain” and “lights”, amongst many others that were encountered by research participants during the shared journeys of this research (see Chapter 2). Just as one’s immediate vicinity is constantly changing, so too are the things that are encountered as one moves through a landscape. As the landscape is incrementally revealed to the journeying body, each step of the foot or turn of the wheel reveals a different perspective; from a slightly different vantage point. However, *things* too, are in a state of movement, whether perceptible to the naked eye or not, and as a result, various situations and circumstances inherent to the mobility and interaction of landscape features become apparent.

Real things, while physical and discernible in the landscape, are dependent on one’s life experiences and patterns of perception (as discussed in Chapter 3). When perceiving bodies – human, in this instance – communicate about *things*, both naming and description are involved. Nomenclature, as a component of representation (discussed in Chapter 3), even though inclined toward significant slippage in interpreted meaning, provides a relatively definitive tool of communication when compared to the act (or art) of description. To describe things and the circumstances in which they interact is a subjective process. The way that *things* are described, like naming, also relies on one’s personal perception. Things are realised in imagined and imaginative ways.

Narrating one’s personal journey relies on the presence of things to trigger description. It also, however, relies on the recall of memories and telling of stories. These *real* things are woven into stories; stories that rely on the thought space of memory and perception in order to be told. The narration of a particular place is thus reliant upon things *and* their stories, unique to each individual; unique to each place (see Argounova-Low 2012).

How does this discussion of the real and the imagined relate to betweenness? Somewhere, in the space between the real thing and the imaginary understanding, *something* takes place – something indescribable – and within and through that taking place, things become possible. In the case of this research, and its creative practitioners, the space between the real and the imagined is loaded with possibility, as it is the creative practitioner's role in the world to make new material combinations out of otherwise unconnected things – be they literature from words, sculptures from wood, visual artworks from paint and canvas or music from sounds.

In the next section we will examine the real and the imagined as it is interwoven through places. To do so, we will explore the stories of three Tasmanian creative professionals – a writer, an architect and a poet – to determine where the space between the real and the imagined might reside; what the space of the creative field might look like in practice and how it might be given presence in the professional work of creative practitioners.

### **Between the real and the imagined**

The process of looking at and reflecting on an unfolding landscape reveals that there is a constant progression of *things*. Such things, however, are not simply things in isolation; they are not only discrete entities that may be named and passed by. *Things* and the places in which they are located are entwined with the perception, experiences and stories through which they are remembered and communicated.

The way children know and interact with places offers an understanding that is not only less hindered by the complications of adult concerns, but also the foundation stone to creative ways of being in the world. As a child, author Danielle Wood was given permission by her parents to go anywhere on the beach and rocky headland that framed either end of the beach, as long as she could be seen from the windows of the family shack. Having spent many childhood hours ensconced in this space, Wood is able to convey her landscape connection. One of the landscape features of

her play space on the rocky headland was a series of favourite rock-pools. Wood (in interview, 2010) states:

So these are those rock-pools. This is the one we used to call the toilet, and as you can see, it's actually a big bowl ... this one was always the warmest. And this is the bathtub. But see how it's got this big rock plonked in the middle of it – which is sort of wrong... But it was this nice little kidney shaped bath-tub. And then this is the swimming pool – which is cold.

In Wood's description, the real rock pools are transformed into the imagined world of a young person, which are conveyed years later through the thinking of that child, now an adult. The mechanisms through which these real and imagined circumstances interact are through the realm of story. The toilet, bath tub and swimming pool are all products of an imaginary world – a world that may be lived out as an imagined reality in the playful landscape of a child. For any other walker, they may just be three pools carved from the rock – with no significance at all. The real rock pools and the imaginary toilet, bath tub and swimming pool are the same landscape feature understood from different vantage points – in this instance, through the same experiencing body of Wood the child and Wood the adult.

As a child playing in this landscape, Wood knew that if she could see the windows of the shack then her family could see her and, therefore, that she would be protected and safe. In her mind, however, Wood drew an imaginary line from the shack out to the rocky headland and spent many childhood hours playing in the known visual space of the shack window. Wood the child interprets the landscape as a space that she may access and come to know. In drawing an imaginary line, she performs an act of mapping and, thus, controlling the landscape, in doing so making the space her own. To cross the imaginary line would be to go outside the bounded realm of the known landscape into the unknown, un-be-seen-able world around the headland. Now, some thirty years later, Wood explains her imagined, yet very real line. She states: “This is the mapped space, this is the known space, this is where you are

allowed to be, but once you get around that corner you are in a whole new territory and you're on your own" (in interview, 2010). As a teenager, Wood is given permission by her parents to cross the line and explore the landscape around the headland. It is this journey that Wood and I undertake together. She calls the extended journey, which ventures well out of sight of the shack, "getting off the map" (in interview, 2010). As we walk together around the headland, I begin to understand her childhood relationship with this particular place. The rock platforms around the headland, out of sight of the shack, are isolated and give the sensation of being in a remote place. There is a sense of adventure and a little fear as communal safety is left behind. The imaginary boundaries that shape her movement act like a force field and the *power* of the space between the real and the imagined becomes apparent.

The mapping of the line between the shack and the edge of the rock platform is a mechanism through which Wood is able to know and understand this particular place. This mechanism of *coming to know* begins in childhood and forms the foundation for a sense of belonging. The notion of belonging is often underestimated, though it continues to grow in prominence as a geographical concept (Mee and Wright 2009). Probyn (1996) suggests that people 'long' to belong, though the strategies for doing so are varied, and have varied outcomes (ownership of land is one among many other factors; see Instone 2010). In Australia, the sense of belonging may be complicated by issues of colonisation and differing cultural perceptions. When poet, Dorothea Mackellar (1991) penned the poem 'My Country' she was in Europe, and inadvertently fostering a love for Australia through having to leave it behind:

I love a sunburnt country,  
A land of sweeping plains,  
Of ragged mountain ranges,  
Of droughts and flooding rains.

I love her far horizons,  
I love her jewel-sea,  
Her beauty and her terror –  
The wide brown land for me!

While one can see the youthful love Wood has for her rock-pools, she does not cite a sense of belonging as something she achieved through the process of mapping her place. As Wood (the adult) states of her experience while overseas:

I was walking from a train station up to a writer's museum up in Edinburgh, and on every pavement stone there was a quotation from a famous writer and there was one from Walter Scott that said: "This is mine, mine own native land". And I stood there and I felt like the pavement opened up and this big kind of circular hole down through history opened up and I imagined... well I couldn't imagine that kind of belonging. I don't have that kind of belonging. Imagine being Scottish and standing in Scotland and you could actually feel this kind of infinite belonging. You can't feel that here, you can't have that here (in interview, 2010).

In reading the writing on the pavement that shook her foundation of Australianness, Wood returned home to interpret that awareness. She took that awareness of not being able to belong in the places in and through which one loves and lives, and translated them into a novel, *The Alphabet of Light and Dark*. She states:

So, what came out of all that thinking that I was doing about how to write that novel and that sense of sadness and difficulty in belonging I ended

up writing about all these women over different generations who really got their primary sense of belonging in the sea, in that liminal space – in-between land masses. So, the character of Alva really belongs in the water and the character of Essie does, to a degree, too. So, that was my sort of ‘literary conceit’ for ... that was how I made it a story; that was how I tried to represent it in writing. The sea was the space where it was possible to belong (in interview, 2010).

Wood’s conclusion is, it seems, is that it is difficult to belong in Tasmania if you do not carry the genetic and cultural knowledge of the place, but the sea provides a neutral space, the space between the continents. According to Malpas (2009, p. 14) water, as a physical component of place, is an integral part of human life:

Water, its presence or absence, and the forms in which it appears, is fundamental to each and every place on earth. Indeed, along with soil, air and light, water is elemental to place, and so also to all life and dwelling in place. Moreover, human life is itself essentially determined through its entanglement in place and places, and so is constituted, if indirectly, perhaps, through water and its forms. The centrality of place that I am alluding to here arises out of a conception of the relation between human being and place, according to which who and what we are is fundamentally determined by the places in which we live – and this is so even while places are also shaped by the lives that are formed within them.

What was an initial betweenness – a between the real and the imagined – in the form of a confrontation provoked by reading some writing on the pavement, as well as such experiences as finding a rock in her rock pool bath tub, provides Wood with a reason to write. She states:

I wanted to capture something of that bitter-sweetness that you feel in the Tasmanian landscape... I think it’s a combination of an inability to

belong and... that fact that because places are always changing – you can't ever own them, they're always slipping away from you<sup>83</sup>. And that's a reason to write about them, to hold on to whatever you can of them, for as long as you can (in interview, 2010).

For some, belonging in Australia is not an easy thing to accomplish, given that there has not been a lot of 'long' in the 'be-long'; just under 230 years of colonial occupation is infinitesimal compared to the 60000 plus years of Aboriginal life in Australia. The moment of recognition of one's incapacity to belong in the places in which you have been born and raised is given a powerful edge through Wood's description. The feeling that one's core being is dropping out, falling in a hole through history; that one can never claim ownership of either place – Scotland or Australia – is a gut-wrenching moment that shakes one's imagined sense of stability in the world.

A contemporary Australian sense of belonging must be forged without the benefit of the deep cultural knowledge that Aboriginal people were able to develop over thousands of years. Architect David Travalia states: “[m]aybe ... it's unspeakable, maybe it's just... – it's that thing of knowing without thinking” (Travalia, in interview, 2010). Such unselfconscious deep knowing that evolves through generations and involves concentrated and focused attention on the feel of the landscape on your skin and in your heart. Poet, Adrienne Eberhard, reflects on the deep connection that Aboriginal people developed with the landscape. She states: “[Aboriginal people]...didn't own [the land *per se*,] but the land was part of them and [Europeans] have such a different way of looking at things” (Eberhard, in interview, 2010). Recognising the powerful connection between Aboriginal people and the *real landscape things* – the tracks, beaches, grasslands, creeks and rock platforms of Australia – that were “part of them” (in interview, 2010) makes colonial inhabitation seem just that, an *inhabitation*, as one might *inhabit* a room in a motel.

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<sup>83</sup> Wood acknowledged the poet, Pete Hay, for this idea that places are always changing and slipping away from you.

The awareness of Australia being colonised from all places on the cultural spectrum infiltrates and even pervades how people know Australia and develop there-from a capacity to belong. The everyday experiences of people in the landscape are very real interactions with physical things; one conceptualises those things in a multitude of ways, depending on one's perception and life experience (considered in Chapter 3). How do creative practitioners see their capacity to belong within and to the Australian landscape? Travalia, in conversation with Australian landscape painter, Lloyd Rees, recalls Rees being interviewed: "somebody was interviewing him and they were asking him about his kind of sense of the landscape and his seemingly Aboriginal empathy with the landscape" (in interview, 2010). Rees's landscapes are moving and gentle images of Australia, as if a great sense of love is present within them. Travalia continues:

...and they put that question to him [Rees] and he said, more or less, rubbish, that his family history was French, his family goes back a multiple of generations French, he is as new to this land as anyone else and all he is doing is seeing the land through his already culturally preconditioned eyes. He didn't have an Aboriginal sense of landscape anymore than anyone else who arrived here (in interview, 2010).

Even though Rees was painting landscapes of profound emotional register, it was not Aboriginal ancestry or even a deep attunement with Aboriginal perspectives that shaped that capacity. Travalia continues, speaking on behalf of Rees, "[t]he [Indigenous] people have been here sixty thousand years at least, probably longer, and the only thing we can do is humbly ask how to understand it. We can't, we'll never know. There is so much embedded knowledge that we'll never know really" (in interview, 2010). Through the re-told words of Lloyd Rees, Travalia alludes to the quandary of belonging that non-Indigenous Australians face. This quandary is recognised and experienced as melancholy by landscape painter, Philip Wolfhagen:

I am always thinking about the history of this place, European history and ... Aboriginal history ... I am driving through a really colonial



landscape, I still see it as such ... There is a sense of presence; there is a sense of sadness, the demise of that [way of being in the world]. I think that everyone would agree that that sort of sadness seems to pervade a lot of Tasmanian landscapes. Even the sound of wind in Casuarina trees, it sort of evokes... (in interview, 2010).

That does not mean, however, that a different connection – an emergent connection – is not possible, and that what connection there is cannot be deeply vital. According to Eberhard:

I suppose I think a lot about that past but I also think there are a lot of people today, European people, who also build really strong connections with the land and to deny them that connection I think is not right either ... I don't believe that you have to trace your connection however many thousands of years back, but connection can get built, that is part of our humanness, that we do connect very deeply with places in a very short space of time. I am not quite sure, does it come from the whole idea of ... walking over the land and that you absorb it somehow through your feet? But I think we do, I think we all do, build those connections and that they matter (in interview, 2010).

On their journeys people encounter means through which they may have and share experiences and build connection. The experience of a rock pool is not simply as a word, a name and a *thing*; it is a contextualised web of experience and understanding that is processed in the imaginary world of the participant. While the *real* is often regarded as the reliable, secure, and knowable, without the imagined, the real ceases to exist. The real is a bounded and knowable thing, but it is also open to the interpretation and perception of the knower. It is the same bounded-openness that was noted in our earlier considerations of place (Chapter 3). The space between the real and the imagined contains the realm of possibility. The spirit with which one approaches a real *thing* allows the *thing* to *become*; it is the space of betweenness.

The space between the real and the imagined has implications for how place is understood and enacted. Most Australians carry a degree of belonging along with inability to belong, oscillating between the two or experiencing both simultaneously. As we have seen through the lens of belonging, it is both the real and the imagined that determine our way of being in the world and in turn determine what is possible to be.

### *Created in translation*

Creative practitioners are masters at exploring and creating betweenness; they create spaces in which affective resonance may occur. Through creative practice it is possible for practitioners to translate the space between the real and the imagined, to interpret and make meaningful the connections between things. Creative practitioners have a diverse set of tools and philosophies to facilitate such engagement. These tools help to reinforce the notion that betweenness is knowable, though it asks to be skirted around rather than pinned down. Creative practitioners also have ways of imagining those tools and philosophies of engagement that assist in the process of drawing the betweenness of place. In this section we will further the exercise of ‘giving presence to betweenness’ by reflecting on creative practitioners’ thoughts and mechanisms for creating affective spaces, of creating the spaces of and for betweenness. This is well elucidated through a re-consideration of architecture.

### *Living within a quiet form*

As has already been discussed (see Chapter 4), architecture has a genealogy that sits at the core of human personal and cultural wellbeing. Architecture is present in the landscape in a diverse array of forms some of which give presence to betweenness, some that do not. Travalia states, “I find the kind of almost belligerent commercial architecture just, I mean I understand the technical thing, how it happens, I just find it absolutely unnecessary, I just run away like somebody has poured hot oil on me, I [or we] don’t need it: a delicate petal perhaps” (in interview, 2010). According to Travalia, that belligerence is about forcing things onto people, mandating how they occupy and perform within a space. In contemporary architectural terms, “... a lot of people say the voice of architecture is ‘me’, ‘I’, ‘say’, ‘do this’, ‘be that’” (in

interview, 2010). This architectural railroading of often unsuspecting building users is unfortunate, when in fact, according to Travalia, “[t]he best of it doesn’t *do anything*” adding, “*I think the voice of architecture is quiet ...*” (in interview, 2010). Travalia believes that buildings carry the potential to reverberate in subtle, unassuming and humble ways. He suggests that architecture might prompt an awareness through such questions as “‘How did I feel?’, ‘What happened?’, ‘How did I get there?’, ‘What happens next?’, ‘How will I move on?’, ‘What things will I take away of importance?’”, noting further that, “*none of those things you can actually control, nor should you, but you can actually facilitate*” (in interview, 2010). Travalia is speaking of the tangible forms of built structure. Timber, bricks, steel, glass, fibreglass, plastics; forms that have been visualised, drawn and re-drawn, imagined, discussed and drawn again. These materials, Travalia argues, can be oriented amongst each other in ways that are *quiet*. Quiet may mean many things, though for me it speaks of a form that is sophisticated, explorative and resolved: a built form that may allow one to daydream.

Architecture is perhaps best evaluated through the spaces in which it facilitates activity, sensation and emotion: physical spaces that might include lines of sight, room to dance, shadowy corners that the light never touches, or experiential spaces where solitude or worldly company may be accommodated. Travalia argues that “*the best of it [architecture] doesn’t actually tell you anything. The best of it actually helps you find ways to see, understand, feel, reflect, be calm, be engaged, receive, engage with others*” (in interview, 2010). Through its material combination, Travalia (in interview, 2010) suggests “*... architecture is creating a moment of interaction ... it has that sense of providing engagement*”, be that engagement with the self, with others or with the spaces and places alluded to, encompassed and facilitated by the built form.

### The artfulness of writing with words

There is an intimate relationship between places, the way such places (and journeys within them) are imagined, and the means through which writing processes – the act of writing and the result of writing – are realised. The space between the real and the

imagined is conceptualised and developed in a multitude of ways that rely on both place(s) and creative practice to bring writing into being.

In the first instance, the real place and thus the spaces between the real and the imagined are *gathered* as a source of raw materials. When Eberhard journeys through her particular place, the place she chose to share with this research, she imagines that her journey is a ball of wool:

I suppose I actually see it more as wool – a ball of wool. Hard to describe it – that the wool rolls out and that is my path and I suppose it's to do with the house being at the centre of things and that this is where I write and that maybe the house is where the ball of wool starts and the wool unravels as I make my journey ... somehow it unravels and it's about allowing, and the journey happens – and I'm thinking specifically of here – and that the wool comes back into the ball and brings back all those experiences, all those moments and all those layers, so that the ball – in fact it's not actually the ball unravelling and staying unravelled, but it comes back and it's encompassed again – so that all of that journey is somehow encompassed in the ball of wool (in interview, 2010).

With that wool it is possible to imagine that Eberhard goes on to craft works that give presence to that journey and awareness.

Secondly, in terms of the actual writing process, each artist has a unique experience. Writing can be a vulnerable, naked space in which to present oneself. Wood states:

When it's good and when it works well, you become unaware of that surface layer ... about what's the point of writing? Am I good enough? Will anybody ever read this? Will anybody ever publish me? You know, all of those sorts of surface level questions. When writing is going well, you're beyond that and it doesn't matter about that anymore, and there's a real pleasure in nailing something down or getting it just right ... (in interview, 2010).

Words can be elusive; they can be there, but how to find them? Wood beautifully describes the process: “... it’s a bit like being inside your own head, running around chasing the ghosts of butterflies and every now and then you actually get one in your net” (in interview, 2010). The creative process of imagining things that have not yet been imagined can be hard work; it is an activity that requires one to don gaiters and hat and walk around the same ground again and again, always carefully looking, seeking to catch a glimpse of something that works – something so butterflyesque that you swing to gently trap it. Sometimes you miss, but sometimes, you surpass what you could have hoped and land something of such vibrancy that others see the ghostly beauty you have snared.

Thirdly, in terms of the result of writing, or what it might do, writing has the capacity to reach millions of readers, unlike a visual artwork for example which, particularly if held in a private collection, may only reach a few thousand people at best. A book also has a sustained (for a time) and captive audience. How does an author conceptualise such a readerly space? Wood states: “There is a world that gets made out of words, but it’s not just one world. It’s an infinite series of parallel worlds...” (in interview, 2010). This is because each reader brings a world crafted within their own perceptual apparatus to the reading of a novel, just as each person understands the world around them through individual understanding.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the creative field of poetry offers a window into meaning that is poignant yet inherently slippery; poetry is a window to betweenness. Each poem carries a new combination of words and sounds and, thus, the difference inherent within each poem means that each carries a register of affect that is different to all others. Even so, much poetry, even with the best of intentions, does not carry the combination of thought and sound that resonates. According to Hay, “[m]ost poems just paint evocative pictures and that’s perfectly fine”. Others, however, “cut to the heart of deep, inaccessible truths”, though he adds, “... only the very best poems do that” (in interview, 2010). Adrienne Eberhard states that poetry “is not just about the words, it’s about the form, the shape of the poem, the way the words and the imagery carry the meaning, whatever it is that you are trying to write about” (in

interview, 2010). Writing a poem provides accessibility to the same inchoate, sensate awareness as reading or experiencing a poem. For Eberhard “...there is something indefinable about a poem and the way a poem works ... there is a magical quality to a poem and to the writing of a poem when it is a great poem or a really good poem” (in interview, 2010). What a poem also does is “help us to see things afresh and remind us of what it is to *be* .... the extraordinary nature of life ...” (in interview, 2010). In this sense, the reciprocal relationship between place and poet is symbiotic, each reliant on the other.

Writing is a particular sort of creative practice, and, of course, it is the mechanism through which this research is currently being presented. Watching these words trickle onto my screen (a trickle that I often wish to be a stream!), I can well appreciate Eberhard’s words<sup>84</sup>:

...to write a good poem, one that works, is like part of your brain, or my brain, is switched on and another part is switched off and it is when these two things come together that I can write the poem, so there is something very conscious happening but there is also some very unconscious... It’s like you enter a different world in your own consciousness (in interview, 2010).

When Hay states: “I get epiphanous moments at inconvenient times, and I can’t do anything about them, so when I finally sit at the word processor or even when I sit down with a pen and pad to write a poem I almost always try to resurrect one of those epiphanous moments – after some time has passed” (in interview, 2010). Time is an essential quality to writing. There are times, though, when I think that writing is more like singing. It is lyrical and melodic but, more importantly, it comes from a place in my brain where my inhibitions are muted and soft. Some places, just like some writing experiences, carrying a capacity to alter one. As Eberhard reflects:

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<sup>84</sup> I feel eligible to write in a personal tense here as, through the process of drawing the thesis with words, I too am participating in the creative act of writing.

Once I reach this point I feel like everything is gone and I'm just – I lose my sense of complete consciousness. There is a part of me that is just in this place and is not fully ... well maybe the way to explain it is that somehow my senses take over and I am experiencing it through my body, which is something that is very important to me as a writer. I think writing is very much of the senses and that is how we experience the world, too; the two are connected (in interview, 2010).

To be between in the landscape, to be between the real and imagined in place, is a component of belonging. Creative practitioners are experts in the role of translation of the space between the real and the imagined. Eberhard carries this idea through her own personal exploration of the place in which she journeys. She states:

...it opens up to the idea of the horizon and what that horizon offers ... it is crucial to have that place that you are somehow anchored to and a part of, but there is also a very strong need to feel that that is not all there is and that [the place is] somehow part of something much bigger as well. I feel a very strong sense that I am in Tinderbox but that the world is just out there and, I suppose, the ... sense of the Southern Ocean out through Storm Bay. I feel a real sense of release and that somehow I am anchored here but I am moving out into that other world too (in interview, 2010).

When located in a landscape, the process of translation for Eberhard involves an awareness of this immediate presence not being all that there is. It is impossible to imagine the breadth of activities, of journeys, that are being simultaneously carried out. The sheer volume of people in the world makes those thoughts unimaginable, unrepresentable; but something as simple and everyday as a horizon line can encompass ungraspable infinity. This then feeds back into the idea that being open to possibility is the only truly logical course of action in daily activity, in knowledge production, and all that is between.

## Concluding remarks

When novelist, Danielle Wood, located her lead characters' focus of belonging as the sea, she was exploring her own sense of Australian belonging vicariously. Wood stated that, as a genealogical descendent of colonial settlers, it is her personal experience that it is not possible to belong in Tasmania, Australia, no matter how hard she tries. Poet Adrienne Eberhard, on the other hand, suggested that she could foster belonging over time, and through her feet – through a connection with the ground on which she walks. Speaking of gathering her stories from the places within which she undertakes her everyday journeys, Eberhard builds a connection that fosters her sense of belonging. I argue that these orientations can occur simultaneously. As members of communities, of participating citizens, people develop small connections with things. Sometimes those connections develop further and deeper and sometimes they do not, the development of connections being determined by one's perception and prior life experiences and by the nature of the thing with which one connects (as discussed in Chapter 3).

It is my strong sense that Eberhard and Wood both fostered deep connections with the places through which we journeyed together for the purposes of this research. That they pondered *belonging* as a concept and used it to demarcate their identity as Tasmanian Australians was noteworthy. Belonging is an ongoing process. It is something that changes form as we engage with our feet in the landscape, where the landscape is written into one's being.

The capacity for dwelling involves an awareness of one's surroundings. As one moves through the landscape, an openness to the possibility of possibility drives the quest for becoming and the openness to new ways of seeing, new ways of being. People make choices every moment of every day. Making a choice to be *open* to where and how one is in the world; being *open* to the *capacity to be altered* is the first step to bring betweenness into one's lived experience.



## Interlude: Sound-scaping the Line

*I don't have a watch, but it must be around 6pm. The air is warm and golden, the windows are down and I'm moving along pretty quickly. It's a weeknight so there aren't many cars on the road. On the slow bends you can hear the birds outside. I don't feel happy or melancholic – more 'of' myself, alert, looking for something – open to possibilities.*

*When I am drawing my line, I am in-between. I am neither at my place of work (my office) nor at home. I am in limbo, a space where I cannot write or draw. I cannot do dishes, tidy the house nor care for my children. My hands are pretty much locked to the wheel and the column shift gear stick and my feet to the pedal on the floor. When I am tired of thinking, sometimes, I sing.*

*Singing is the act of producing musical sounds with the voice. More specifically, air is expelled from the mouth using the diaphragm, as is the case with regular breathing, though with singing the pitch of the voice is altered using the vocal chords. Singing is a means to accessing emotion and feeling – evoking memories of the past and creating memories of the future. Singing is a mechanism for storytelling – not only for conveying records of events, but also the interpretations of cultural values and meanings.*

*Singing is a universal phenomenon. People the world over have singing as part of their culture. Most singing involves shaping words to suit a body of music – cantata. Singing is also performed without music and this is called a cappella. Singing can be formal, requiring years of practice and training to be performed in front of large audiences in concert halls or around campfires. Or, singing can be informal; singing to a baby in the home. Sometimes singing is inspired by the acoustic possibilities of a place: like a valley, a cave, a woolshed or a highly refined architectural form – like a temple, church or mosque.*

*For me personally, while drawing my line singing simultaneously provides a sense of connection and release. My singing is not guided by memory of words or tunes – it is more an instinctive vocal pathway that has patterns and repeats of sound. It is spontaneous and improvised; though both practice and confidence with my approach were developed while on longer journeys, generally trying to encourage a baby to drift off to sleep.*

*I don't always sing however. More often than not I hum. A loud hum for me feels a little like I imagine chanting would. Humming is technically a lot like singing, though it is a sound produced with the mouth closed. Rather than using the tongue to shape words, the vocal chords make inflections in the pitch which creates a myriad of sounds. The volume, pitch and, thus, tone can be varied to change the effect of the sound.*

*The background to my humming is the HK Holden. This is, in effect, my orchestra, my rhythm sticks, my bass. The engine, as it changes gear and speed and (depending on the time of year) the pull of air through the open windows, helps to shape the sounds I make. The sound created by the car and the hum is soothing and meditative and it is one of the things that I very much love to do. I am usually alone, though my partner has commented that this is one of his favourite sounds – the music of funerals.*

*The sounds I make are not songs, nor speech, yet they have a kind of raw meaning. This quite primitive form of sound can be evocative. When I open myself to my voice I am allowing my own emotion to move, to be activated. In a sense I am letting the place in to me. I reflect on that, the songs shift and the place again comes in. This self-reciprocating positive feedback system continues until my concentration is broken – or required.*

*This opening of me is akin to poetry, a sonic poesy that cuts to the heart of what poetry may be, or is for me. It is a personal connection with a place that has no tangible outcome other than a change in me. I do not record these sounds and I do*

*not have an audience. I would say that that is not the point. I would say that if someone wants to hear it – they should do it. They should sing my line – or their line.*

*Each journey then becomes a mini sound-portrait; an auto-ethnographic construction of meaning that opens the self to the place and enhances one's understanding of places and place in general. I then reflect on the experience of the sound poesies through this writing – I am not sure if actually writing poetry would do what I need it to do, but maybe it would. Perhaps this is something I should try.*

*When Aboriginal Australians sing and paint and dance they tell stories about the creation, about the dreaming. This story telling is difficult for me to understand, though the more I read the more I feel that I can embody some understanding. I often feel that this understanding is less intellectual than visceral. Part of what and why I sing is about the emotion associated with this land. My singing is about connecting me to place, releasing me from my 'closed' ideals and allowing an opening. Working with the materials at hand – my line, a road, a car and my voice – I am singing the self, and the space of between into being. The singing is created by a (somewhat) conscious, though spontaneous 'opening' through the act of singing. This sound sculpture enables, embodies and creates openness. It is this opening that is essential to the connection to a place and to my connection to this place. For whatever it means – this is my songline.*

# Chapter 6: Drawing conclusions

## Introduction

As stated in Chapter 1, the key aim of this research is to understand betweenness and, in doing so, to demonstrate that betweenness could – and even *should* – be central to geographical discourse. Everywhere and nowhere, betweenness is elusive, requiring a flexible approach to the process of research. I have, therefore, developed an innovative methodological approach of *drawing with words*. The characteristics of this methodological approach of *drawing the betweenness of place* are:

- To use *words* to draw the betweenness and thus give the betweenness of place *presence*.
- To allow the thesis to do what the thesis says can be done. That is: to allow the thesis to *be* betweenness (as compared to representing betweenness).
- To demonstrate the significance of betweenness to the geographical and discursive imagination.
- To demonstrate the need for particularity and, thus, flexibility in the academic setting; that is: academic openness to suit the ‘thing’ being researched and, in doing so, to engage with representation as a lively and undetermined act.

The research concludes that betweenness cannot be demonstrated. In explicating the inexplicable nature of the between, I have created betweenness through my own creative practice of *drawing with words*. Whether one may find betweenness drawn in this thesis is determined by the openness and perception of the reader.

## Theoretical implications

The experimental nature of this research has brought to light significant implications for geographical discourse. As a geographical concept, betweenness has hitherto been treated as subsidiary. It has, throughout geographical discursive history, been asked to perform tasks of specific intent: to represent a space that is a requisite to a desired argument. In this research, however, betweenness *itself* is explored as an important component of human experience and understanding. The results of this research reveal that betweenness has a central role in the way space(s) and place(s) are imagined and arranged and, thus, within geographical discourse and the broader geographical imaginary.

This research makes a significant contribution to knowledge in two key ways: firstly, in regard to place, and secondly in terms of representation. I will deal with each in turn.

### Place

The significance of place as a concept has, in the last decade or so, been afforded belated acknowledgement. Indeed, place is the frame through which the political becomes possible (Malpas 1999). This research explores the connections and relationships people form, the inspiration they draw and the politics they derive from knowing a place well. In turn, it is argued that giving presence to those understandings, connections and inspirations through the stories that people tell informs an ongoing discursive engagement with place: theoretically, empirically and personally. Creative practitioners are adept at sensually engaging with and interpreting place. In addition, creative practitioners make it their life's work to bring together new material combinations with the aim of helping others to see the world from alternative vantage points.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the idea of place may be considered as 'bounded openness'. It is worth quoting Malpas again (2012, p. 11):

For there to be bounds is for there to be that which is bounded – an open domain in which things can ‘take place’; for there to be emergence is for there to be an openness into which emergence takes place; for there to be openness is for there to be that which may emerge into what is open.

Indeed, the idea of the boundary makes possible the notion of possibility; and, furthermore, the boundary around the real and around the imagined – even though these are binaries – allows the possibility of betweenness. I do not suggest that betweenness is like space, but rather, it is like place, and intimately connected to place. It is place that makes possible the possibility of betweenness.

In addition, the idea of between is used in this research as a literal between two points, a related concept to betweenness. It is the bounded-openness of the concept of between that allows betweenness to emerge. All concepts are reliant on boundaries to further their possibilities to otherness. Just as a body melts to the pavement without skin, so does a concept need a word; but that word *skin* does not breathe, shed, sweat, oil, urinate, defecate, vomit, cry, ooze, burst, bleed, birth or ejaculate.

In addition, betweenness has implications for how interdisciplinarity is handled by tertiary institutions and for how geography, people, space and place are given presence in the contemporary discursive setting. Geography as a discipline is perfectly placed to foster interdisciplinary initiatives. Betweenness gives geography and geographers the scope and capacity to become the arbiters of creativity; creativity in research methods and broader approaches to teaching and learning. Geography has the space, and the credentials for such innovative developments.

### **Representation and more-than-representation**

One of the themes of this thesis has been the relationship between representation and betweenness. As shown in Chapter 3, representation is a fundamental component of human life, sitting as it does at the core of communication and, thus, all social life.

Representation, however, is a bounded way of knowing – as proponents of NRT have shown. I argue that NRT has not fully realised the implications of their central idea. NRT and more-than-representation have called for an engagement with representation as a lively and undetermined act, yet they only go as far as representing the ‘non’(Thrift 1996) or ‘more-than’(Lorimer 2005) representational. This thesis, in contrast, has attempted to take a further step, by actively trying to do *what it says can be done*. Representation, too, may better be understood (and practised) as a form of ‘bounded openness’. Betweenness, as it is practiced in this thesis, blends the insufficiently acknowledged slippage of representation (see Chapter 3) with the lively indeterminacy of NRT (see Cresswell 2012). The key technique for engaging with representation as a “lively and undetermined act”<sup>85</sup> (Cresswell 2012, p. 4) that I have developed here is to draw the betweenness with words, and thereby *give betweenness* presence without directly representing it.

### *Drawing with words*

I have developed and demonstrated an approach of *drawing with words* to facilitate communication of betweenness. I also refer to this mode of communication as *giving presence* (see Chapter 1). Drawing is itself a technique used to explore the “elusive world[s] just beyond ... reach” (Taylor 2008, p. 11)<sup>86</sup> and it has provided a useful conceptual tool to give presence to betweenness.

Drawing with words is a task that is difficult to define. Different to other textual forms, though related to poetry, poetic prose, literature and creative writing, it is a form of art-writing. It carries the academic tilt of persuasion, but strives to convince through an *affective resonance* with the reader. The combination of words appeals to the reader’s affective register rather than logical and rational intellectual processes. It is my view that this is what Thrift and others have been calling for (see Chapter 3). But non-representation theory does not go far enough towards achieving what it

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<sup>85</sup> This suggestion from Cresswell was quoted and discussed in Chapter 3.

<sup>86</sup>For this quote and an extended discussion on drawing and its role in this research see Chapter 1.

advocates. NRT is representation alluding to non-representation; representational critiques of non-representational subjects. This research has attempted to take that small next step. As shown in chapter 1, this is where the “something thrown, something caught” (Berger 2005, p. 77) of drawing meets the “catch[ing] sea foam in the breeze” (Anderson and Harrison 2010, p. 26) of non-representation theory (discussed in Chapter 3).

Stepping outside the accepted boundaries of knowledge production has taken some effort to write, and, I imagine, some effort to read. To some degree, the reader has had to allow themselves to be carried along by the journey, as not everything could be revealed overtly; rather, an emergent writerly/readerly process has evolved. Each chapter in this thesis has *given presence* to some aspect of betweenness. This *presence* and, thus, *betweenness* is embedded in the discussions and stories of this thesis. Presences are narrated through the lenses of memory, journeying, the everyday, representation, place, lines, autoethnography, poetry, dance and architecture (a list that is not definitive).

What has hopefully emerged is the capacity to *sense* what we have drawn. Here we see that what has been drawn is maybe betweenness itself, through a trace – a hint – of what it might be, and demonstrated by the variables chosen for this research: not pinned down as such, but glimpsed like that of a photograph of a half-light; of a shadowy world that does not present in exact terms; a fleeting moment of recognition, because betweenness has already moved on, just as you and I have through reading and writing this thesis. Rather than an image, or a sentence to quote, it is hoped that you are left with *an awareness*, a sensate knowledge like you have caught something in the corner of your eye; and while you are not absolutely certain of its presence, a visceral echo of awareness sustains a small tinkle of hope.

To create the raw materials for such drawing we have had the body of the reader, the representations of text, and the several images contained within these pages. As a writer, drawing in words, I have had to provide the raw material to be eroded (stick and smoothed wet sand), layered upon (paint and canvas) or pressure applied (a



finger across a responsive surface like a digital touch screen or skin). In stringing together a long line of words I have made a trace in your mind. As you realise the words, you respond; this might involve any number of responses, perhaps including a smile, or a grimace. These words might slightly fluctuate one's rate of breathing – faster and slower – across the breadth of the thesis as you find fault and are irritated or find something new or expressed in a way that glimmers, and are subsequently moved.

## **Reflecting on the process**

As with any large scale research project, there are a myriad of options for how the research might be conducted. Research choices have the potential to open some opportunities and to close off others and, thus, affect the success of the project in the fulfilment of its goals, the capacity to address the research inquiry and the quality of the findings. Such research choices (of the current study in particular) also affect the scope for future research: in terms of the potentialities that are opened up, by what is left out due to the practical constraints on the project, and what is revealed through the process of conducting the research.

### **Research limitations**

In this research, key limiting components existed within research design and interviews, analysis and writing and, concerning the broader scope of the research. I will deal with each in turn.

#### ***Research design and interviews***

Conducting interviews opened and closed many potential research opportunities. Interviewing involved selecting a particular sub-set of the population. Choosing creative practitioners as research participants created several difficulties that were intrinsic to their profession. Creative practitioners were found to be busy people.

Time taken to organise interviews was protracted and, thus, securing participation in the study, organising time, and explaining what was required (while not revealing too much) was a laborious task. To some degree attracting participation required an element of charm, and being able to weave the idea of a narrated journey together as something interesting to do.

Having to communicate openly about an intimate capsule in their personal lives, to a complete stranger, knowing that elements of their conversation may be on the public register, to be used as the researcher saw applicable, required trust in me as a researcher and confidence in themselves as persons able to make choices about the wording with which they would be comfortable in the future. Being recorded as we journeyed together, there was no space for error as the conversation would be transcribed verbatim, interpreted, analysed and used with the free judgement of the researcher. The requirement of such trust may have inhibited some participants, as their personalities varied.

On some occasions the responses offered from participants seemed to be shaped by their sense of their connection with me – even if that judgement was made in the instance of meeting or over the space of a couple of hours of the interview. One participant said quite openly, “gee, you’re quite naive”! Perhaps I was being just as open and honest as possible, but I took it as a compliment to my capacity to allow people the space to tell me their stories. Or perhaps that is the nature of betweenness – to be open to world without preconceived ideas.

The process of unravelling what people are saying or trying to say is a slow process and requires a certain depth of focus as well as openness to where the conversation might go from any given point. All of the conversations were exhausting and a little awkward, as I traversed the line between expert PhD researcher who knows quite a bit about what I am doing, to the total novice PhD researcher who knows very little about what they are doing.

### *Analysis and writing*

The process of analysing the data of this research was awkward and clunky. I seemed to be doing and re-doing things that I was not sure were necessary. Not using N-Vivo may have been a mistake, though it felt right at the time. Manually coding and sorting the data meant that I literally went through the interviews hundreds and hundreds of times, each time coding, organising and layering, shifting perspective and repeating the process. What I finally drew from the results was very far removed from those initial coding exercises. That said, it is difficult to say whether it would have been more or less efficient to use a different process, as a significant component of the difficulty lay in the nature of the research itself. Trying to locate something very difficult to describe (even indescribable) was challenging and required a creative approach blended with a large dose of persistence. Nevertheless, when the results did finally emerge, they made sense, seeming to fit like a glove – and perhaps that is what the process of analysis is all about.

In terms of the writing process it was important to honour the trust of participants and to follow ethical guidelines. Drawing with words was challenging and tested my capacity as a creative individual. Finding those spaces to draw in words was a deeply meditative practice and required still, quiet nights in the university, long after the five o'clock mass exodus – and still I am not sure that it has been achieved. The aim of doing, or practising more-than-representation was bordering on the more-than-academic and perhaps outside the scope of PhD research. But it is done, and I am not turning back now! The research did take a long time though, for several reasons, some of them outside the scope of the research and, more significantly, my control. I lost sense of my own edges throughout the project and bled into my surrounds. Building the internal resolve to continue came from deep within – but it also came from a profound belief in the project itself. There is something deeply nurturing about the betweenness and its drawing – nurturing for the self, and nurturing for the places thorough which one moves. The scoping of the project may have been less than perfect, but its significance was not.

### *Broader scope*

In some sense the limitations of the study were formed by its practical and temporal boundaries. It would have been a significant addition to the research to include, for example, my foray into road-kill. Having documented myself skinning animals and written about these processes, it was sheer practical limitations that prevented me from including such material. It meant an extension to methods, results and conclusions, and the word limits simply did not accommodate such an increase.

It also would have been significant to have been able to present the ideas of betweenness as art objects. Given that the work is partly about the nature of representation, to be forced into this position would have rendered the thesis toothless. Allowing the thesis to do what it says can be done is a significant aspect of this achievement. Making visual works may have given the thesis, and geography, the opportunity to move to different levels, an opportunity changed, but not lost.

### *Future research*

Geographical research should be permitted, when the circumstances are present, to present art-works as a major assessable component of the research. A growing number of geographer-artists will find themselves supervising geographical research at the doctoral level. Their expertise will trickle into academia, and academia must be ready to adapt to those changes.

Further to this, and directed more specifically towards betweenness, there were several aspects of betweenness that could have been explored specifically and in more depth. The unspoken – between the lines in text, the gutter in comics, the switch from one camera angle or scene to the next in film – are all areas I would like to explore further.

In addition, I have now explored the point in space that makes the Sydney Opera House possible and a random line of road in rural-remote Tasmania to see if betweenness is present in those places. This vantage point on betweenness could be developed further through explorations of other cultural icons and how betweenness

manifests in different places through different architecture. Betweenness could be examined from the vantage point of blobs or shading (as compared to points or lines) and could draw on the expanding discourse of drawing to do so. Betweenness could also utilise the mobilities discourse to explore betweenness through folds or flight. Drawing on *non* or *more-than* representational theories, betweenness could be expanded through investigations into sensuality, hybridity or materiality. Tapping into contemporary discourses through betweenness is an exciting space to occupy.

## Bringing it home

This research has achieved its primary aim of furthering our understanding of betweenness. In doing so, it has also demonstrated that betweenness is profoundly significant and should be seen as central to the discipline of geography. In addition, this research has shown that some things defy representation and, thus, academic guidelines need to be able to flex with the way new research is being produced. This falls in line with the concept of “[bounded openness](#)” put forward by Malpas (2012, p. 9); the everyday practices of people, structures of governance and the discursive arena are all key factors herein.

This research has shown that in the case of betweenness drawing with words is a novel and informative way of giving presence to that which cannot be represented. In doing so, this research shows that making art with words is a new form of art practice outside current practices of both art and literature.

In addition, this research demonstrates that everything is between, but not everything is betweenness and, thus, that between and betweenness are not the same thing; secondly, that using a series of lenses, betweenness may be drawn – in this case using an interpolative framework; and thirdly, that betweenness has implications for how a place is experienced and how it might be imagined.

Finally, this research demonstrates that the everyday lived experience of human beings provides the subtle capacity to be altered; accessing spaces of betweenness is in part about being open to such possibilities. This is key to the evolution of culture as it has happened thus since the earliest humans were making drawings in the sand or on cave walls, making music and creating dwellings. It is the work of creative practitioners to enhance the spaces of that possibility. Betweenness is a central framework for all human interaction – even though it will always be a shimmer in your mind.

We reach the close of this thesis and I have demonstrated the significance of the betweenness, where it fits and what implications it has – but nowhere have I said, in so many words, just *what* it is. This is because, in many ways, that is the point and that is the nature of betweenness. Betweenness is elusive. It is always just out of sight; no matter how fast you shift your attention, it can never be encompassed in a single moment – it is multiple and contingent and for that reason it is complicated. It is hoped that in the construction of this research that betweenness has been given at least some presence and that the reader is just a little closer to knowing what betweenness might be. The research concludes that *betweenness is and exists only insofar as it is*. When you perchance happen upon it, enjoy that fleeting moment. Carry that moment in your heart, for it is here that it will be given the best opportunity to find its way out of you and into another. To substitute words for the idea of betweenness cannot illuminate what betweenness might be. It is for that reason that betweenness has been drawn in this thesis, because drawing offers a mechanism through which to evoke something of the qualities of betweenness. It is in the moment of this thesis that reader and writer meet, and thus it is here that betweenness moves like a line through the thesis, tracing a line on the page as your eyes glide from word to word, a line in your thoughts as you ponder those words and a sensate awareness of betweenness as a form, a shade, a texture and a composition – a drawing of the betweenness of place.

# Appendices

## Appendix A

### NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF EXAMINERS OF PhD THESES

#### 1. Introduction

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) research higher degrees are awarded on satisfactory completion of supervised but independent research, which is described in a thesis. The thesis is to be submitted within four years of full-time study. Coursework can be included in the requirements for the degree, but this is generally minor and preliminary to the research project; and you will have been advised if the award of the degree is not based entirely on the thesis. Extracts from the Rules and Procedures relating to the examination for research higher degrees are given below.

#### 2. The examiner's report

You are asked to complete the formal Examiner's Recommendation Form, and to provide a written report on the thesis, *within five weeks* of receipt of the thesis. The report should be complete in itself; annotations in the thesis are not a substitute for the written report.

Under Rule 113.18.2, you may require the candidate to respond to questions on the thesis. If there are matters that require elucidation, you can send a list of questions to the Secretary of the Board of Graduate Studies by Research with a request that the candidate responds before you complete your report.

##### 2.1 Recommendations (a), (b), (c) (d) and (f)

If you make the recommendation (a) [on the recommendation form], please highlight the strengths of the thesis in your written report. If you make the recommendation (b) [on the recommendation form], please state clearly the specific corrections that you wish the candidate to make. If you make the recommendation (c) [on the recommendation form], please state clearly the corrections that the candidate should make and the areas within the thesis that must be addressed. Please note that a recommendation (c) requires that the revised thesis be reviewed by a research committee, to ensure that the substantial revisions recommended by you have been completed, prior to approval by the Head of School.

If you make one of the recommendations (d) or (f), please state clearly in your written report the weaknesses and major shortcomings of the thesis which led to your recommendation.

##### 2.2 Recommendation (e)

The PhD degree is awarded for 'a substantial original contribution' achieved in two to four years of full-time candidature. It is the outcome of a project treated with a greater depth of scholarship and research than is required for the Masters degree or possible in the shorter time allowed. Recommendation (e) [on the recommendation form] allows an examiner to recommend the award of a Masters degree for a thesis submitted for PhD. However in no sense is a Masters degree a 'failed PhD', and this recommendation will only be appropriate in the few cases where the thesis is at the standard of a Masters degree rather than at the doctoral level. A thesis with particular deficiencies rather than simply lacking in depth should receive a different recommendation.

If you make the recommendation (e), please state clearly in your written report the basis for the recommendation.

#### 3. Extracts from the Rules and Procedures

This section provides information concerning the University of Tasmania's Rules and Procedures governing the administration and award of Research Higher Degrees. The Rules and Procedures may be viewed in their broader context at our website: <http://www.research.utas.edu.au/gr/policies/index.htm>

**Rule 113.2.1** "Board" means the Board of Graduate Studies by Research constituted by Ordinance 70 (Graduate Studies by Research).

**Rule 113.2.1** "thesis" means the collection of materials that a candidate submits for examination.

##### Rule 113.4 Thesis

- 4.1 A candidate is to undertake a program of research and advanced study on a subject approved by the Board, and present for examination a thesis that -
  - (a) embodies the results of the research; and
  - (b) unless the Board decides otherwise, includes substantial written work.
- 4.2 A candidate must not present for examination for the Degree any work that has been accepted for a Degree by this university or any other institution. This is subject to clause 4.3.

# Appendix B

## NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF EXAMINERS OF PhD OF FINE ARTS

### 1. Introduction

Research higher degrees are awarded on satisfactory completion of supervised but independent research which is described in a thesis. The thesis is to be submitted within four years (PhD degree) or two years (Masters degree) of full-time study. Coursework can be included in the requirements for the degree, but this is generally minor and preliminary to the research project; you will have been advised if the award of the degree is not based entirely on the thesis. Extracts from the Rules and Procedures relating to the examination for research higher degrees are given below.

The Rules of Higher Degrees by Research use 'thesis' to mean 'the collection of materials submitted for examination by a Candidate' (Rule 113.2.1). The thesis for the degree of Master of Fine Arts or Doctor of Philosophy (Fine Art) may be presented in one of two forms: *Exhibition and exegesis* or *theoretical thesis*.

### 2. Exhibition and exegesis

This form could be expected to result from a studio-based enquiry project. It incorporates an exhibition of the body of works of art, craft or design produced during the course of the degree program, supported by a written exegesis.

The University advises candidates that the thesis should 'convey clearly the description of the project, how it relates to the field as a whole, how the project was pursued, what techniques were used and how successful they were, and the outcomes of the research.' Since works of art cannot always present this information without ambiguity, it is appropriate that a written component is included with the exhibition of works. This written component is termed the exegesis. It is not examined as a separate work but must be considered with the exhibition, which contains the substantive original discourse of the thesis.

#### *Exhibition*

The work which is submitted for examination and the presentation format is determined by the candidate in consultation with the supervisor. Normally it will take the form of an exhibition in an art gallery. Examiners will in most cases be flown to Tasmania on the afternoon preceding the examination, accommodated near to the exhibition site, and given an appropriate length of time for each examination. If one candidate only is under examination, the examiners would normally leave at the end of the examination day. If the work of more than one candidate is to be examined, further time will be allocated.

The purpose of the exhibition is to provide a coherent and substantial demonstration that the candidate has achieved the intentions of the research program (as outlined in the research abstract) at an appropriate standard, and in doing so has made a significant original contribution to the discipline.

Candidates may choose, but are not obliged, to make available to the examiners drawings, maquettes or sketches, and other supporting material which they feel may assist in an understanding and evaluation of the work. The location and display format for such work is an individual matter determined by the candidate in consultation with their supervisor. All elements submitted should be contextualised in the exegesis.

#### *Exegesis*

The purpose of the exegesis is to elaborate, elucidate and place in context the exhibited group of artworks. While the structure and writing style adopted for the exegesis may vary, examiners may expect it to embody the descriptions specified by the University as cited above. It may also provide guidance to the examiner regarding the sequence of development in the work exhibited. The exegesis is in no sense a separate exercise in art theoretical discourse, which would be undertaken only in the case of a theoretical thesis as described in 3 below.

While there are no prescriptions, the exegesis would not be expected to exceed 12,000 words in the case of the MFA or 20,000 words in the case of the PhD, and significantly shorter exegeses will in some cases be appropriate.

Each examiner will be given the candidate's exegesis, bound in a temporary binding, at the time of viewing the exhibition. Time will be provided for a process of viewing, reading and review. Examiners may take exegeses away with them for further reference during the writing of their reports.

Last updated March 2009



## Appendix C

Natalie Smith  
PhD. Candidate  
School of Geography and Environmental Studies  
University of Tasmania

Project Summary for Submission to the Board of Graduate Studies  
Friday April 22, 2005

Title: 'Mapping Mapping: Drawing the Between-ness of Place'

This research resides among the disciplinary traditions of art, architecture, philosophy and geography. It seeks to generate a multi-disciplinary conversation that revolves around representation as a multifarious yet implicit means to understanding the nature of place. Through an investigation of the 'philosophy of place' in conjunction with the traditional representational tools inherent to these disciplines – landscape painting, the blue-print or plan, and cartography, it is hoped that this research will identify new ways of seeing place that address situatedness, multiplicity and the perceived nature of reality. It asks the following questions: what are the possibilities of this place; how do we map the unique-ness of a place and, how do we give presence to place beyond representing or re-presenting it as we have always done? This thesis seeks to 'give presence to', that is: to engage, harness, map and *engage with* the between-ness of place. Through the application of these diverse imaginaries and realities of experience, this thesis seeks to address the nature of both power and powerless-ness, particularly in relation to governance and planning.


In undertaking this work, I will explore the nature of mapping in the construction of knowledge, meaning and power. In particular, I intend to investigate the geographical, socio-cultural and political characteristics of traditional Indigenous tracks and pathways, and their relationship to the overlay of contemporary tracks and pathways in the form of footpaths, tracks, roads, highways and freeways and how these transport routes (insular bubbles of movement) reflect ways of seeing and doing in the world – as a means to the construction of place and placeless-ness. In order to map the between-ness, it is imperative that I conduct a '*situated engagement*' with the tracks themselves and employ a variety of languages to convey the 'presence' of this place without absolute reliance on traditional representational tools. In essence it is a form of mapping, a mapping of the imaginaries and realities of experience that seek to illuminate the between-ness of place.

Over the period of my candidature, I wish to produce artworks and dwelling structures that advance this situated engagement in ways that move beyond the text of a traditional thesis, and thereby employ the diverse languages of all of the disciplines in which I am positioned.

## Appendix D


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Email Dean.Graduate.Research@utas.edu.au

BOARD OF GRADUATE RESEARCH



1. The Members of the Board were informed as to the interdisciplinary nature of your study and of your interest in the integration of areas such as architecture, landscape, philosophy and geography within your thesis. You proposed in your original submission a qualitative research design including the use of photography.
2. You requested approval for consideration of a method of presenting your research with an approach which differed from that usually practiced within the School in which you are enrolled (ie. a written thesis).
3. Therefore, the Members of the Board did not approve the submission of the final thesis in a form that differed from the usual practice adopted within the School. However, the Members wished to encourage you to consider as part of the process of research education, the mounting of an exhibition of your work for members of the public that is not examinable and to consider the possibility of including photographs of the exhibition within the thesis or the inclusion of a CD in the back cover of the thesis as part of the materials provided to the examiners.

On behalf of the Board of Graduate Research,



Professor Carey Denholm  
Dean of Graduate Research

Note: Contact details have been removed.

# Appendix E

## Examiner's report

But should it be worth a First Class Honours?

The issue is really what you call a thesis, and what the genre of a thesis requires. IF it is accepted that a thesis should provide a clear argument, provide evidence for and against it, review the evidence in a balanced way, and come to conclusions based on this analysis, then she has not done this. This is the traditional social science approach. But then she did not intend to do this.

IF you accept that a thesis can be a creative work, that weaves together strands from different traditions, that ignores contrary or alternative viewpoints, that makes a passionate plea that goes beyond normal academic argument, then she has succeeded in pulling off a fascinating and successful work.

Further she shows a capacity for independent and creative work that offers much promise for future postgraduate research, and could probably write in a more disciplined social science style when she needs to.

In a sense the answer to the question as to whether it should be given first class honours is a policy issue for your department about how you constrain the genre of the thesis. If you are prepared to accept, from time to time, a piece of work that avoids traditional conventions but makes a real contribution to knowledge, I would suggest a mark of

best wishes

## Appendix F

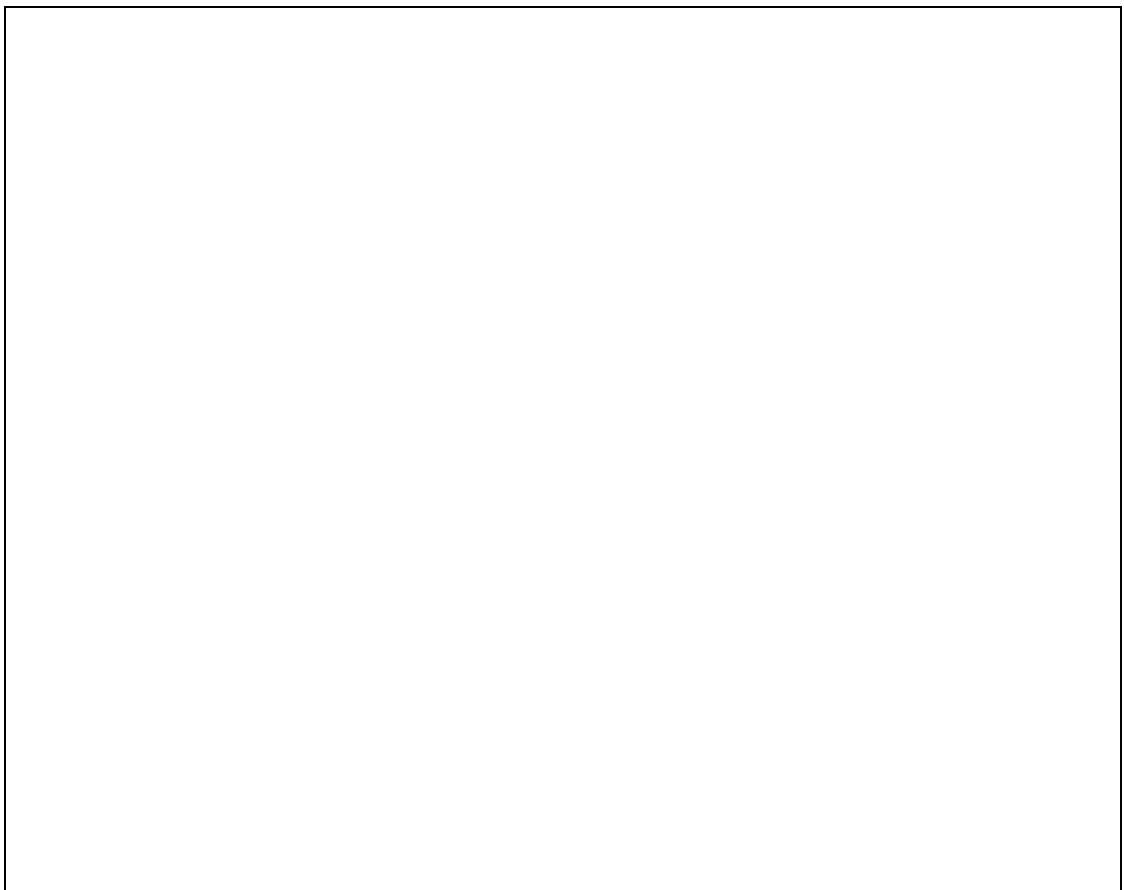
Pat Brassington	Photo-media artist
Adrienne Eberhard	Poet
Julie Gough	Visual artist
Maria Grenfell	Composer
Pete Hay	Poet
Cath Hall	Architect
Malcolm McMillan	Dancer
Brigita Ozolins	Visual artist
Lyn Reeves	Poet
Denise Robinson	Visual artist
Roger Scholes	Film maker
Marcus Tatton	Sculptor
David Travalia	Architect
Philip Wolfhagen	Painter
Danielle Wood	Writer
Leigh Woolley	Architect

# Postscript

Having reached the end of this thesis, I had hoped that we may have become a little closer to an explanation of what betweenness *is* or *might be*; but, alas, it remains as ethereal as it ever was. Perhaps, however, betweenness is something that you *feel* rather than *know*.

Please take a moment to find a pencil and have it in your hand.

Think back over the course of the thesis, over our journey through betweenness, and quietly reflect. Let betweenness envelop you, and escape from you at the same time. Let what you *feel* mark the page.



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